

When people talk about Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), or domestic violence, they are referring to coercive and controlling actions used by one person to gain power and maintain control over the other in a relationship. In this brochure we explore the Power and Control Wheel\* and the ways that Economic Abuse is used. Economics include income, spending, purchase decisions, credit, employment, personal property/valuables, and access to resources.

When you feel there is an unfair use of money – from spending to luxuries, eating out or paying bills – then you may be looking at a situation of economic abuse. Economic abuse takes many forms. It can include use of your credit to make large purchases, or putting phone, electric or cable bills in your name. This way the abusive person will not have any responsibility for their spending or bills.

\* The Power and Control Wheel was developed by the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project Duluth, MN

## FACTS ABOUT ABUSIVE AND CONTROLLING RELATIONSHIPS:

Many people don't recognize controlling behavior as abusive – because of socialization, we might think it's normal. It also can be difficult to recognize because it escalates over time, making it hard to see how bad things have become.

It's a pattern of behaviors that makes you feel crazy or trapped. Many people state that they walk on egg shells, or sense trouble coming, or have changed their whole way of being in reaction to their abusive partner.

Conflict in relationships is normal, but when the belief is that someone has to win, be in charge, or "wear the pants" then it may be an abusive relationship.

For more information or help call:

[Insert your local contact info]

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## USING ECONOMIC ABUSE



**What does it look like in abusive and controlling relationships?**



**Mending the Sacred Hoop**  
mshoop.org

Erica got pregnant while in college and quit. She became a stay-at-home mom and had 2 more children with her partner Alton. Alton remained in school, graduated, and has had a good career.

The choice between career and family is a difficult one for many mothers. Quite often many women put individual goals on hold for the sake of family while men pursue good jobs for the sake of supporting the family.

**Alton complains about Erica shopping too much and overspending so he only puts a few hundred dollars into their bank account when needed.**

Men who are controlling believe stereotypes are real and apply those beliefs to their relationships: "stay at home moms sit around watching TV, eating bonbons in between laundry and diaper changes."

### USING ECONOMIC ABUSE

Preventing her from getting or keeping a job • making her ask for money • giving her an allowance • taking her money • not letting her know about or have access to family income.

**Anytime he wants to, Alton goes out, traveling to ceremonies, hunting, but blames Erica for money problems because she doesn't budget correctly.**

Abusers will control money by hiding cash, having a secret bank account, not telling how much the check was or how much he makes, spending freely on himself.

**Alton was arrested for domestic assault was mandated into a batterer's intervention program as part of a plea agreement that will cost \$400 by the time he's done. He blames Erica for the expense because she called the police. All he did was push her during an argument.**

Batterers often use the costs related to their violence as a tool against their partners: using blame to distract away from the batterer's use of violence.

### USING ISOLATION

Controlling what she does, who she sees and talks to, what she reads, where she goes • limiting her outside involvement • using jealousy to justify actions.

### MINIMIZING, DENYING AND BLAMING

**The stove was broken – only two of the burners worked and Erica had to borrow money to get it fixed, because Alton said they couldn't afford it. Soon after, though, Alton buys an ATV.**

Abusive men often make all the decisions on large purchases and justify why their purchase is more necessary than others.