



DV Basics & Trauma Responses

Nisha Williams, Legal Director

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A statewide membership organization serving all 100 NC counties & approximately 85 domestic violence organizations.

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MISSION:

NCCADV leads the state's movement to end domestic violence and to enhance work with survivors through collaborations, innovative trainings, prevention, technical assistance, state policy development, and legal advocacy.

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Training Objectives:

- ✓ Understand domestic violence statistics and dynamics with Court Staff.
- ✓ Understand how the dynamics of abusive relationships impact interactions with Magistrates.
- ✓ Increase knowledge of how trauma operates in domestic violence & how that impacts victim interactions with Magistrates.



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Ice breaker

- Question: what are some depictions of DV in music, culture, movies, art and fiction that stand out to you?



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Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is a **pattern** of intentionally violent and/or controlling behavior used against a family member or a dating/intimate partner to gain **power and control** over that person, **during** and/or **after** the relationship.

Domestic violence is also known as family violence, intimate partner violence, or dating violence, and is a type of trauma someone can experience.

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Power and Control



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Who Are Victims?




- Women, men, people of all genders
- Cisgender, transgender, and gender non-conforming people
- People of all ages
- Latinx, Black, Asian, Native American, White, (people of all races and ethnicities)
- Undocumented immigrants, U.S. citizens, documented immigrants
- Lesbian, gay, heterosexual, bisexual, queer
- Able-bodied and people with disabilities
- People of all socio-economic statuses
- People of all religions/faiths
- Veterans & civilians



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Domestic Violence Facts

The only statistical identifying risk factor is being a woman.

According to the DOJ- 76% of victimizations by intimate partners between 2003 to 2012 were against women.

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Domestic Violence in the US

- Every **9 seconds** in the US, a woman is assaulted or beaten.
- On average, nearly **20 people per minute** are physically abused by an intimate partner in the US. For one year, this equates to more than 10 million people.
- Intimate partner violence accounts for **15%** of all violent crime.
- **19%** of domestic violence involves a weapon.

North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence. "Domestic Violence National Statistics." National Coalition Against Domestic Violence. September 11, 2015. <http://www.ncadv.org/files/National%20Statistics%20Domestic%20Violence%20NCAADV.pdf> (accessed August 25, 2016).



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Domestic Violence Facts

People who Abuse:

- Most abusers are violent only with their partners. The only exception is that abusers are more likely to physically abuse their children than non-abusers.
- Abusers can be very charming people, leaders in the community, successful businesspeople, or famous stars.
- Outsiders find it hard to believe someone of this status would abuse, and the victim finds it all the more difficult to get assistance or even call the police.



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Domestic Violence Facts

Effects of Drugs and Alcohol:

- Sometimes in abusive relationships, either one or both, are using drugs and/or alcohol when the abuse takes place.
- Both the victim and the abuser may attribute the abuse to the alcohol/drugs.
- However, the alcohol/drugs are not the CAUSE of the abuse. It is important to remember many people drink and don't beat up their partners.



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Domestic Violence Facts

Effects of Drugs and Alcohol Continued:

- If the abuser is drinking, the injuries to the victim are likely to be more severe because the abuser's judgment is impaired.
- Victims may turn to alcohol/drugs as a way of coping with the violence.



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Domestic Violence Facts

Leaving the Abuser:

- Every time the victim has the courage to leave the abuser, the victim learns something about their ability to survive outside of the relationship.
- **By offering a consistent response, we can help the victim make the decision to get out of the dangerous situation permanently.**



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Domestic Violence Facts

Leaving the Abuser continued:

- Abuse tends to increase in frequency and severity over time.
- However, a victim is at the greatest risk of being killed at the time of trying to leave because the abuser's power and control is threatened.
- **75% of domestic murders occur when the victim and abuser are separated.**



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Risk Factors for DV Homicide



Prior Physical Violence: In 70-80% of intimate partner homicides there was physical abuse prior to homicide.

Campbell, Jacquelyn C., Daniel Webster, Jane Koziol-McLain, Carolyn Rebecca Block, Doris Williams Campbell, Faye Gary, Judith M. McFarlane, Carolyn Sachs, Phyllis W. Sharps, Yvonne Ulrich, Susan A. Wilt, Jennifer Manganello, Xiao Xu, Janet Schollenberger, and Victoria Frye. "Risk Factors for Femicide in Abusive Relationships: Results From a Multisite Case Control Study," *American Journal of Public Health* (93) (2003): 1089-1097.



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Risk Factors for DV Homicide

Guns:

- A woman is five times more likely to be murdered when her abused has access to a firearm
- Over half of all intimate partner homicides are committed with guns
- Studies have shown that women who are threatened or assaulted with a gun or other weapon 20 times more likely to be killed.



Campbell, Jacquelyn C., Daniel Webster, Jane Koziol-McLain, Carolyn Rebecca Block, Doris Williams Campbell, Faye Gary, Judith M. McFarlane, Carolyn Sachs, Phyllis W. Sharps, Yvonne Ulrich, Susan A. Wilt, Jennifer Manganello, Xiao Xu, Janet Schollenberger, and Victoria Frye. "Risk Factors for Femicide in Abusive Relationships: Results From a Multisite Case Control Study," *American Journal of Public Health* (93) (2003): 1089-1097.



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DV Homicide In NC in 2023

DV homicide rates:

21 as of 3/6/23:

- 10 murders are the result of murder-suicide
- At least 14 of the 21 victims were people of color
- 3 victims were children (4 if you include one who turned 18 a few months prior)
- Murders have taken place in 11 different counties across the state (highest is 6 in Guilford)
- Firearms were used in 85.7% of murders and 100% of murder-suicides

<https://nccadv.org/domestic-violence-info/homicides/homicides-2023>



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What Can We Do About DV/IPV Homicides

Traditional:

Legal remedies – focus on public safety and accountability after the fact

Most of the focus was on getting victim to safety after violence occurred and holding offender accountable

Ex: Law Enforcement and Court Systems

Campbell, Jacquelyn C., "If I Can't Have You, No One Can: Power and Control in Homicide of Female Partners," in *Femicide: The Politics of Woman Killing*, ed. Jill Radford and Diana E.H. Russell, New York: Twayne Publishers, 1992: 99-113; and Langford, Linda, Nancy Isaac, and Stacey Kabat, "Homicides Related to Intimate Partner Violence in Massachusetts," *Homicide Studies* 2(4) (1998): 353-377.



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What Can We Do About DV/IPV Homicides

Emerging Remedies:

In addition to legal remedies, emerging focus on DV as a public health issue; focus on increasing protective factors and decreasing risk factors

Research says that the most successful programs target risk/protective factors

Campbell, Jacquelyn C., "If I Can't Have You, No One Can: Power and Control in Homicide of Female Partners," in Femicide: The Politics of Woman Killing, ed. Jill Radford and Diana E.H. Russell, New York: Twayne Publishers, 1992: 99-113; and Langford, Linda, Nancy Isaac, and Stacey Kabat, "Homicides Related to Intimate Partner Violence in Massachusetts," Homicide Studies 2(4) (1998): 353-377.



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Emerging Public Health models:

- Conditions that *may cause* domestic violence are called risk factors
- Conditions that *may prevent* domestic violence are called protective factors



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Risk & Protective Factors

Risk Factors	Protective Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Poor emotional health •Low self-esteem •Attitudes and beliefs that are hostile towards women and supportive of rape myths •Chaotic family environment •No adult support •Community instability •Lack of employment opportunities •Discriminatory laws/policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Positive youth development •Media literacy •School/family/community connect edness •Healthy sexuality education, communication and relationship skills •Social support •Availability of services •Gender equality •Political and legal equity for all people



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NCCADV PREVENTION WORK

NCCADV has a prevention team working on evaluating 3 different projects addressing protective factors namely: Youth education through bystander curriculum, paid parental leave, and trauma-informed workspaces.

For more information on these efforts check out

- www.traumainformednc.org
- www.preventviolencenc.org

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What is trauma?

Individual trauma

An event, series of events, or set of circumstances experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life-threatening.

Examples of Individual Trauma:

- Physical, sexual, and emotional abuse
- Threats of violence, witnessing violence
- Neglect
- Racism
- Discrimination and oppression
- Warfare, state violence
- Medical events
- Natural disaster/pandemic
- Forced displacement or separation
- Accidents
- Job loss
- Living in poverty
- Divorce
- Loss of a loved one

Collective or historical trauma cumulative emotional harm or impact on a group, organization, or community caused by traumatic experiences or events.

Secondary or vicarious trauma the emotional effects that can occur when someone bears witness to the traumatic experiences of another.

Definitions from Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

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Community Relationships with the Court System

Minority communities have historically been traumatized by involvement with the court system and may be cautious about interacting with Court Staff.

How does trauma impact different marginalized groups?



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Community Relationships with the Court System

Black/African/African-American Communities:

- Black/African/African-American survivors are routinely arrested at higher rates of domestic violence.
- Often victims are arrested when the act of violence is only in self-defense against battering when calling the police for assistance.
- Black/African/African American women often experience institutional violence perpetuated by police officers and the justice system itself when they utilize the legal system.

Domestic Violence in Communities of Color FAQ Collection by the Women of Color Network, Inc.

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Community Relationships with the Court System

Latinx Communities:

- Deportation or government interference in Latin communities is commonly threatened by abusers to prevent Latinx survivors from reporting or utilizing the court system.
- Language access is another barrier for Latinx survivors, especially when given resources for the survivor or their families.

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Community Relationships with the Court System

Asian/Pacific Islander Communities:

- In the Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on DV report, between 21%-55% of Asian women reported experiencing IPV and/or sexual violence in their lifetime.
- API DV dynamics often include multiple abusers living in the home, more “push factors” (“If you leave, I want a divorce”) than “pull factors” (“come back I love you”) and survivors are more likely to experience further violence after leaving their abuser from their communities and/or families.

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Community Relationships with the Court System

Immigrant Communities:

- Immigrant and Limited English Proficient survivors of domestic violence are often threatened with deportation by their abusive partners and are less likely to seek help from law enforcement because of these threats or past experiences with law enforcement in their home countries.

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Community Relationships with the Court System

Native American or People Communities:

- According to NIJ's research program on violence against American Indian and Alaska Native women, 55.5% of American Indian/Alaska Native women experienced physical violence by an intimate partner violence during the lifetime.
- The Historic and generational trauma of colonization, genocide, kidnapping of children, and other government sanctioned attempts of assimilation has rightly created a strong sense of distrust and traumatization of survivors when the court becomes involved in their families lives.

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Community Relationships with the Court System

LGBTQ Communities:

- LGBTQ survivors experiencing IPV may be reluctant to report abuse or to seek services due to concerns of homo/bi/trans-phobic responses (negative feelings, behaviors or attitudes based on sexual orientation or gender expression).
- Traumatic and historically negative experiences with law enforcement, courts, hospitals or shelters has made LGBTQ survivors less likely to turn to these institutions for help because of a fear of being re-victimized or discriminated against

*LGBTQ Violence in Communities of Color WOCN, Inc. FAQ
Collection by the Women of Color Network, Inc.*

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Survivor Relationship with the Court System

Survivors whose abusers are law enforcement officers are often not interested in involving the legal system as many of the actors within the court and in law enforcement are likely to know and take the side of their abuser.

- As an estimate, 40% of United States police families experience domestic violence, while 10% of United States families as a whole experience domestic violence.

*See Diane Wetendorf, The Impact of Police Perpetrated Domestic Violence, 5 (Diane Wetendorf, Inc 2000),
http://www.abuseofpower.info/Wetendorf_ImpactPoliceDV_FBI.pdf*

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Out of 1,502 respondents, 1,225 called the police after abuse, while 219 did not

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For Survivors Who Called the Police

Effect on Safety



Fear of Calling Again

More than 3/4 of people who called the police expressed fear or concern about how police would react if they needed to call again in the future.



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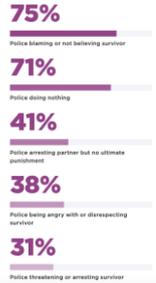
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For Survivors Who Didn't Call the Police

Fear of Police Reaction

92% of those who didn't call were afraid of police reaction.

Survivors noted these as their main reasons



Reasons for Not Contacting Police

People shared additional reasons why they avoided contacting the police.

52% Keeping the violence private

49% Fear of their partners

40% Unsure whether what happened to them constituted a crime

31% A desire to continue their relationships

15% Protecting children

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Stages of Change in a Survivor

- Stages of Change in a Survivor can be cyclical
- They may repeat stages
- Check your biases & assumptions when listening to survivor



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Stages of Change in a Survivor

- First Stage: **Pre-Contemplation**

Victim does not perceive a problem and is **not considering change**.

Survivor could be upset that they are being “dragged” into court and could be very uncooperative in discussions about the abuse.

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Stages of Change in a Survivor

- Second Stage: **Contemplation**

Victim may have concerns or believe there may be a problem, may be ambivalent.

Survivor may still not be cooperative, may also agree to whatever the abuser suggests or wants with only slight hesitation or changes. May ask questions about what abuse looks like and how or why the abuse is continuing.

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Stages of Change in a Survivor

- Third Stage: **Preparation**

Victim is actively articulating a plan to leave in the **near future**. They may be in grief and disbelief.

Survivor may be asking a lot of questions to plan their leave or considering how the court proceedings will impact their ability to leave.

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Stages of Change in a Survivor

- Fourth Stage: **Action**

Survivor is **actively making changes**. May have left an abusive relationship, moved out if victim lived with partner, initiated separation.

Survivor may be more outspoken. May wish to make many more changes to previous agreements. Is finally able to make more decisions for themselves and may be perceived as being more “aggressive” or “opinionated”. Survivor may also be anxious to end communication with abuser and may be willing to accept any of the abusers wishes.

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Stages of Change in a Survivor

- Fifth Stage: **Maintenance**

Survivor has achieved initial goals, such as leaving the relationship.

May still be susceptible to returning to the relationship, remember survivors leave up to 7 times on average.

Survivor may be more outspoken or be more anxious to end communication as ever. Survivor may also hope to remain in the abusers' good graces to discourage retaliation from the abuser.

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During all stages

- Do not demonize abuser to victim
- Remember: you are temporary presence in the victim's life – their community is not
- Continually maintain non-judgmental approach



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During all stages

- Remember all the actors we listed. Many of them are trying to connect with the survivor or requiring something from survivor
- Be trauma-informed
- Internalize this as part of your job*



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Supporting Victims in Crisis

Best practices for serving clients who enter the magistrate's office seeking assistance while in crisis

- Ask the survivor what will make them the most comfortable. Give them options and do your best to provide those options without promising what you cannot provide.
- Listen to the survivor. If they seem defensive, apathetic, or hesitant these could all be coping mechanisms. Listen and understand that the survivor knows what is best for their lives.

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Tips for supporting victims in crisis

Best practices for serving clients who enter magistrate's office seeking assistance while in crisis

- A Survivor in crisis may not have a stereotypical response to seeing or interacting with their survivor. Do not assume that the survivor is not truthful or that they are not a survivor.
- Trauma responses are different for each individual

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Supporting victims who stay?

- Leaving the relationship may not be the best option; They know their lives best and reunification or dismissing a complaint is common.
- What ideas can you share with one another about how you might be as supportive to a victim as possible?
- Safety-planning is vital! It is possible to safety plan for staying as well as for leaving. Connect them with resources. Have info cards for local DVSP in your office.

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Court Staff and Survivors



What practices can Magistrates adopt to better facilitate interactions with Survivors?

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Domestic Violence Trauma and Impact

It is undeniable that DV trauma impacts survivors and their families lives.

DV trauma can also impact magistrates, either through their roles and facilitation, or through the vicarious trauma that may come from working with or empathizing with a survivor.

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What does it mean to be Trauma-Informed

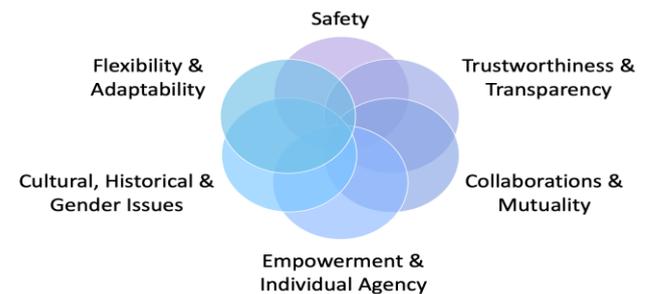


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Key Principles of a Trauma-Informed Approach



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What is a Trauma-Informed Workplace?

A workplace that operates with an understanding of trauma and its negative effects on the organization's employees and the communities it serves and works to mitigate those effects.



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What is a Trauma-Informed Workplace?

A Trauma-informed Org includes:

- Safe, calm, and secure environment with supportive care for both clients and staff
- System-wide understanding of trauma prevalence, impact and trauma-informed care
- Cultural competence and humility
- Consumer/audience/client voice, choice, and advocacy at all levels
- Recovery-oriented, client-driven, trauma-specific services
- Healing, hopeful, honest, and trusting relationships (with each other, clients, and community)

Benefits of adoption trauma-informed approaches (for different audiences)

- Increases safety for all
- Improves the social environment/organizational culture
- Cares for caregivers (not just for family, but also for clients)
- Improves quality of services
- Reduces negative encounters and events
- Creates a community of hope, healing, and recovery
- Increases success and satisfaction at work
- Promotes organizational wellness
- Improves the bottom line (reducing turnover cost, etc.)

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Organizational Opportunities



Guidance Domains for a trauma-informed approach

- Governance and leadership
- Policy
- Physical environment of the org
- Engagement and involvement
- Cross sector collab
- Screening, assessment, and interventions
- Training and workforce development
- Progress monitoring and quality assurance
- Financing
- evaluation

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Magistrates and Survivors

What practices can Magistrates adopt to better facilitate interactions with Survivors.

- Learn about the impacts of DV, and how likely it is that survivors will cross your path.
- Understand how those impacts may affect your roles and how to facilitate your roles while engaging survivors.

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Magistrates and Survivors

What practices can Magistrates adopt to better facilitate interactions with Survivors.

- facilitate your roles while engaging survivors.
- Utilize community and judicial resources in a way that does not exclude or villainize the survivor.
- Listen to survivors and help to advocate for equal facilitation of the judicial process for both parties.

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Question



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We are here to help!

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www.modelcampus.org



www.preventviolencenc.org [@violencefreenc](https://twitter.com/violencefreenc)



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