

DV 101

Domestic violence is a pattern of abusive behaviors used by a person to establish power and control over another person in a relationship.

Domestic violence may follow a cyclical pattern in which there are periods of calm, building up of tension, and then abuse. After a period of abuse, batterers are often apologetic, but as the cycle repeats the abuse usually gets worse over time.

If abusers recognize that their behavior is wrong and sincerely want to change the way they act, they can get help through batterers' intervention programs, therapy, and/or spiritual counseling.

DV Facts: The statistics indicate that one in three women in the USA is, has been, or will be a victim of domestic violence. According to a study done from 1998 to 2000 by Sharifa Alkhateeb, as president of the North American Council for Muslim Women (NACMW), domestic violence occurs in about 10-12% of Muslim families in the USA.

It is our responsibility as members of the Muslim Ummah to fight oppression and injustice. The Muslim community should support and assist individuals and families that are experiencing abuse in their homes, and speak out against domestic violence.

Immigrants & DV: Many immigrants fear they will lose their legal status or get deported if they seek help. Calling any of the resources on the back of this brochure will not result in loss of status for the victim. Please call to get more information about your particular situation.

Children & DV: Many people think that domestic violence does not affect children. However, children who are in households where domestic violence is happening have the same symptoms as children who are abused themselves. Domestic violence can cause long-term developmental, emotional and other problems in children.

Islam & Peaceful Families



Peaceful Families:
And among His signs is this: that He created for you mates from among yourselves so that you may dwell in tranquility with them. He has put love and mercy between your hearts; in that are signs for those who reflect. (30:21)

Community Responsibility To Stand For Justice:
You are the best community that has been created from mankind. You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong. (3:110)

Individual Responsibility To Stand For Justice:
O you who believe! Stand out firmly for justice as witnesses to God, even if it is against yourselves, or your parents, or your relatives; and whether it is against someone who is rich or poor. (4:135)

And why should you not fight in the cause of God and for those who, being weak, are ill-treated and oppressed? Men, women, and children, whose cry is, 'Our Lord! Rescue us from this place where there are oppressors, and raise for us from You one who will protect and help! (4:75)

Responsibility Towards The Oppressed And The Oppressor:
If two believers fall into a quarrel, make peace between them. But, if one of them transgresses beyond bounds against the other, then all of you should fight against the one that transgresses until the person complies with the command of God; but if the person complies, then make peace between them with justice and be fair, for God loves those who are fair and just. (49:9)

Resources

MUSLIM DV ORGANIZATIONS

Al-Baitu Nisa (Gaithersburg, MD): Phone: 301.840.9440

Baitul Salaam (Atlanta, GA): 404.366.6610, www.baitulsalaam.net

Committee on Domestic Harmony (Long Island, NY): 516.942.6133

FAITH (Herndon, VA): 571.323.2198, www.faithus.org

MCCHS (Arlington, TX): 817.589.9165, www.mcc-hs.org

NISWA (Lomita, CA): 310.782.2482, www.niswa.org

Rahima Foundation (Santa Clara, CA): 408.845.0050, www.rahima.org

Sista2Sista (Philadelphia, PA): www.sista2sista.org

Stepping Together (Los Gatos, CA): www.amila.org

Turning Point (Flushing, NY): 718.883.9400, www.turningpoint-ny.org

LEGAL RESOURCES

Karamah - Muslim Women Lawyers for Human Rights: 202.234.7302, www.karamah.org

Legal Momentum: 202.326.0040, www.legalmomentum.org

NATIONAL RESOURCES

National Domestic Violence Hotline: 800.799.7233

Family Violence Prevention Fund: www.endabuse.org

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence: www.ncadv.org

Stop Family Violence: www.stopfamilyviolence.org



About PFP



PFP advocates for domestic violence awareness by facilitating workshops and creating resources for Muslim leadership and communities across America. Our goal is for the Muslim leadership and community to recognize this reality and become catalysts for change from within. The solid support of our funder, FaithTrust Institute has enabled us to pursue such changes since the year 2000. Our workshops are provided upon invitation to a limited number of Muslim communities each year. Each workshop is customized to meet the needs of the local Muslim community and encourages a collaborative approach. If you are interested in having a workshop in your community please contact info@peacefulfamilies.org or call 703.474.6870.

Victims

Friends

Community

Leaders

Imams



Peaceful Families

If You Or Someone In Your Community Is Experiencing Abuse At Home, There Is Help

Have you not pondered how God sets forth a parable of a good word being comparable to a good tree, with its firm roots and branches reaching towards heaven, producing fruit in every season by the grace of its Lord? God creates such parables for people so that they can reflect upon them. (Qur'an, Chapter 14: 24-25)

Have You Experienced Abuse?

You may be in an abusive relationship if your partner:

- **Regularly finds fault with you & makes you feel guilty.**
- **Calls you names that hurt your feelings.**
- **Refuses to let you have friends or prevents you from seeing your family.**
- **Intimidates you by using looks, gestures, or actions such as displaying weapons or smashing things.**
- **Threatens to leave you, hurt you, or commit suicide.**
- **Prevents you from knowing about or having access to money.**
- **Threatens to take your children away and/or says things to turn your children against you.**
- **Beats, pushes, slaps or chokes you.**
- **Forces you to engage in unwanted sexual behavior.**

Once you recognize the abuse, know you are not to blame and you are not alone. No one deserves to be abused. This is not just the law in America, this is the law of Islam.

Helping Yourself

- If you are injured due to domestic violence, get medical treatment as soon as possible. The doctor/nurse will be able to treat you best if they know exactly what has happened.
- Keep notes or a diary of your injuries and the times you were abused. This may help if you decide to leave later.
- Tell someone trustworthy about it. Telling someone is a way of relieving your suffering, breaking the silence, and the first step in getting help.
- Keep copies of important documents, extra clothing, money, and an extra set of keys in a safe place (like the home of a friend or relative) in case you need to leave your situation quickly. Also, memorize important phone numbers.

How Community Members And Friends Can Help

Educate Yourself: Educate yourself about domestic violence. A good place to start is the resource list on the back of this brochure.

Listen: This is one of the most important things you can do. Remember, the person confiding in you has kept this problem a secret from others. Find a quiet place where you can talk safely and without interruption. Listening encourages victims to talk about the abuse.

Believe: Do not deny the abuse is happening. Do not pass judgment. Show your support no matter what decision is made about the abusive relationship.

Validate Feelings: Do not ignore the abuse as this will only serve to hide feelings and to worsen the problem, which is dangerous and destructive.

Show Respect: Show that you respect the person's ability to handle the situation and to cope with it. This will help with empowerment and developing confidence to deal with the abuse.

Do Not Give Advice: As difficult as it is, it is necessary to refrain from giving advice especially when your friend first confides in you. Allow the person in the situation to make decisions about what to do, and when to do it. Your role is to help identify options and consequences which might follow. Example: you could mention that if the victim does not seek help, children could be exposed to abuse as well. Empower the victim with information and the ability to make decisions by spelling out the options available.

Do Not Blame The Victim: This is important because blame is how the abuser often justifies the abuse. Make it clear that no one has the right to abuse another. Explain the dynamics of the cycle of violence. Talk about how Allah does not allow a man to abuse his wife, or a wife to abuse her husband. Similarly, Allah does not allow parents to abuse their children, or children to abuse their parents.

Encourage Seeking Help: Provide support in facing the problem and dealing with it for the sake of each member of the family. Provide support and transportation to places like shelters, legal aid, etc. If you have an Imam you can trust to deal with this situation appropriately, encourage seeking his help first. It is more likely your friend will feel more comfortable with an Imam and an Islamic center than in mainstream social services.

Discuss Safety: Talk to your friend about shelters and other safe places, how to access services, and help create a safety plan.

Do Not Speak To The Abuser: This is a big no-no and can worsen the situation. If the abuser finds out you know about the situation, the problem could escalate. The abuser may punish the victim for telling others about the problem.

Stay In Touch: One of the things abusers do is to isolate victims from family and friends. Keep in touch with your friend as much as possible, by phone or email if not in person. Make sure contact is made in a manner that does not attract the abuser's attention.

Make Duaa': Duaa' (prayer) connects you with the Most Powerful One, our Creator. Pray for your friend. Our Beloved Prophet (May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon him) said that your prayer for a person increases love between you and that person. Encouraging your friend to make dua'a will provide a source of strength and spiritual support.

Adapted with permission from Chaya

Partner With Existing Resources. Include your local domestic violence or sexual assault program in donations and community service projects. Adopt a shelter for which your mosque provides material support, or provide similar support to families as they rebuild their lives following a shelter stay.

Use Zakat To Help. Earmark a percentage of zakat funds to specifically help victims of domestic violence.

Support Professional Training. Encourage and support training and education for imams and community leaders, hospital and university chaplains, and Islamic Studies students to increase awareness about sexual and domestic violence.

Address Internal Issues. Encourage continued efforts by mosques and Islamic centers to address allegations of abuse by Muslim leaders to insure that religious leaders remain a safe resource for victims and their children.

Intervene. If you suspect violence is occurring in a family, speak to each member individually. Help the victim plan for safety. Let both victim & abuser know of the community resources available to assist them. Do not attempt couples counseling unless you have been trained to do so & only after the safety of the victim is insured.

Used with permission and adapted in part from the Nebraska DVSA Coalition and FaithTrust Institute.



How Imams and Leaders Can Help

Prepare To Be A Resource. Research Quran, Sunnah & fiqh to better understand and respond to family violence from an Islamic perspective. Receive training from professionals in the fields of sexual and domestic violence.

Become A Safe Place. Make your mosque a safe place where victims of domestic violence can come for help. Display brochures and posters which include the telephone number of the domestic violence and sexual assault programs in your area. Publicize the National Domestic Violence Hotline number (800) 799-SAFE.

Educate Community Members. Provide ways for members of your mosque to learn as much as they can about domestic and sexual violence. Routinely include information in monthly newsletters, on bulletin boards, and in marriage preparation classes. Sponsor educational seminars on violence against women, children, and men in your mosque.

Lead By Example. Volunteer to serve on the board of directors at the local domestic violence/sexual assault program or attend a training to become a crisis volunteer. **Speak Out.** Speak out about domestic violence & sexual assault in your khutbah's. As an imam or community leader, you can have a powerful impact on people's attitudes & beliefs.

Offer Space. Offer meeting space for educational seminars or weekly support groups or serve as a supervised visitation site when parents need to safely visit their children.