



## THE SOCIAL IMPACT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

- About 60% of family violence cases also involve substance abuse. When both are occurring, both are harder to stop. Many people who are violent toward family members never drink or use drugs. Others drink or use drugs but never batter. So we cannot say that alcohol or drugs cause family violence.
- Children learn from their experiences; this includes learning violence. It is more likely that an adult man who was abused as a child or saw his mother being battered will abuse his wife or girlfriend.
- Of all the abused adults with visible injuries, 95% are women.
- While it's true that some women do hit men, it's the other way around in most cases.
- Battering causes more injury to women than auto accidents, street mugging, and rape combined. More than 33% of the women seen in emergency rooms have been recently battered.
- Threats, harassment, and assaults often escalate just after a battered woman leaves her abuser. Leaving can be the most dangerous time in the relationship. That's why it's important for her to go to a safe, secure place such as a battered women's shelter.
- Texas law permits immediate arrest for suspected family violence, and many police departments now make such arrests.
- An average of 75% of urban police time and 35% of rural police time is spent responding to family violence calls.
- Arrest and jail alone are not usually enough to make a batterer permanently stop being violent. Counseling is also necessary. However, arresting and jailing batterers is important because it temporarily stops their violence and lets them know that our society does not tolerate battering.
- Fifty percent of American females experience family violence at some time in their lives. Your daughter, sister, or neighbor could be next. That makes it your business.

- Family violence also touches your pocketbook. As a taxpayer, you are affected every time police answer a family violence call, or a woman visits an emergency room because of battering.

### **The impact on children**

Children who grow up in violent homes are:

- Four times more likely to be arrested by police
- Six times more likely to commit suicide
- 24 times more likely to commit sexual assault
- 50 times more likely to abuse drugs or alcohol
- 70% of men who batter their wives also batter their children
- Boys who witness domestic violence are more likely to batter their female partners as adults. And thus, the generational cycle continues.
- 62% of sons older than 14 were injured when they attempted to protect their mothers from attacks by abusive male partners.
- Domestic violence creates a home environment where children live in constant fear.
- Domestic violence in the home causes children to show more anxiety, low self-esteem, depression, anger, and various temperament problems
- Male children who witness the abuse of mothers by fathers are more likely to become men who batter in adulthood than those male children from homes free of violence

### **Why Children Don't Tell:**

- Fear of threats – verbal or imagined
- It's embarrassing
- They think that it is their fault
- They think no one will believe them
- They think everyone will be mad at them
- They feel guilty if the family splits up
- They don't want anyone to go to jail because of them
- The more battered women and children we help to live safely, the fewer children will feel they need to turn to drugs, violence or gangs as alternatives to their violent homes. The way to help these children is to hold batterers accountable, and provide adequate support services to their mothers