



# **Shelter for Abused Women Domestic Violence Training Curriculum For Mental Health Professionals**

## **I. Definition of Domestic Violence**

- a. Statutes – federal and state statutes which define domestic violence
- b. Reporting Requirements – clarification of conditions under which mandatory reporting must occur
- c. Training Requirements – required domestic violence training for mental health professionals. Importance of training based on prevalence of domestic violence.

## **II. Facts About Domestic Violence**

- a. National Statistics on the prevalence of domestic violence crimes. Information about types of crimes and trends.
- b. State Statistics on the prevalence of domestic violence crime. Types of crimes and trends identified.
- c. Local statistics on the prevalence of domestic violence crime in the county. Relationship of rate of crime to national and state statistics.

## **III. What is Domestic Violence?**

- a. Legal Definition/Behavioral Definition – statutory definition as well as more detailed definition which includes verbal, psychological, economic abuse.
- b. Power and Control – review of power and control model of domestic violence with information on cultural differences
- c. Characteristics of Victims/Perpetrators – details behavioral characteristics of victims and perpetrators for better understanding of presenting issues and dynamics
- d. Identifying a Potential Abuser – signs to look for in an abuser. Details traits and warning signs



#### IV. Effects of Domestic Violence

- a. On Victims – impact of abuse over time, common mental health issues associated with domestic violence
- b. On children – impact of witnessing domestic violence, correlation between child abuse and domestic violence
- c. On Perpetrators – mental health diagnoses commonly associated with batterers, types of batterers, legal ramifications of domestic violence
- d. Cultural Factors – varied responses to domestic violence resulting from cultural difference

#### V. Victim Risk Analysis and Barriers

- a. Risk analysis and common coping strategies-offers a perspective of the thought processes of a victim when making decisions about the relationship
- b. Challenges to Leaving – details the myriad reasons that victims stay in an abusive relationship, what victims give up by leaving, challenges of the legal and other social systems
- c. Changing the Question – holding perpetrators accountable; Social change as a critical element in ending the cycle of violence

#### VI. High-Risk Groups and Vulnerable Populations

- a. Elder Abuse – detailing special issues as they relate to domestic violence in an elderly population
- b. Domestic Violence and Substance Abuse – issues of self medication, batterer substance abuse
- c. Domestic Violence in Same Sex Relationships – special issues as they relate to domestic violence in a same sex relationship
- d. Immigrants and Domestic Violence – fears of reporting, seeking assistance
- e. Changes in legislation that improve immigrant woman's rights
- f. Teen Violence – dynamics of violence in a dating relationship



## VII. Intervention with victims and Survivors of Domestic Violence

- a. Goals of Intervention – protection, choice making/problem solving, healing post-traumatic effects, rebuilding a life without violence.
- b. Intervention Strategies – nonjudgmental acceptance and validation, providing support and alliance, advocating for safety and building options, willing to experience recounting and sequella of the trauma, education about violence and abuse as therapeutic, coping strategies viewed as strengths, not pathology, understanding substance abuse as a form of coping, pro-social action and self-disclosure facilitate the stress recovery process, transformation of trauma is a lifelong process, assumption of self-determination, importance of therapist self-care.
- c. Treatment Issues – effective and ineffective treatment approaches
- d. Psychological Effects of Battering as a Traumatic Experience – indicators of psychological distress, changes in basic core beliefs about the world, relational disturbances.
- e. Other Post-Traumatic Responses
- f. Safety Planning and Lethality Assessment



## Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this course, participants will:

- I. Articulate an understanding of the common definitions and prevalence of domestic violence
- II. Articulate an understanding of reporting and training requirements around domestic violence in Florida
- III. Identify common patterns of abuse and characteristics of both victims and perpetrators of domestic violence
- IV. Identify the impact of domestic violence on victims, children and perpetrators
- V. Articulate cultural differences which can impact responses to domestic violence
- VI. Identify commonly misunderstood safety and coping strategies employed by many victims of domestic violence.
- VII. Identify barriers that many victims encounter in their attempts to free themselves from violence
- VIII. Identify domestic violence risk factors for elderly, same-sex, immigrant and other vulnerable groups
- IX. Demonstrate understanding of the goals of intervention with the victim and with the perpetrator
- X. Analyze common treatment approaches and their efficacy with domestic violence victims and perpetrators
- XI. Articulate best practices in mental health for domestic violence victims and perpetrators