

Domestic Violence Outreach

Who Are the Victims?

- ¹Twenty-five percent of American women and eight percent of American men will experience domestic violence at some point in their lives. Children are very often witnesses and victims themselves.
- This statistic does not include the vast number of unreported incidents of violence.
- There is no evidence that the prevalence of domestic violence is any lower within faith communities.



What is Domestic Violence?

²Domestic violence (also known as spouse abuse, partner violence, intimate-partner violence, battering, and numerous other terms) is a pattern of coercion used by one person to exert power and control over another person in the context of a dating, family, or household relationship. The spectrum of domestic violence includes much more than physical assault. Domestic violence encompasses a constellation of controlling behaviors that include:

- Actual or threatened physical harm, psychological abuse, and forced sexual contact;
- Economic control;
- Social isolation;
- Destruction of a victim's property, keepsakes, or personal possessions;
- Abuse of animals/pets;
- Misuse of divine beings or religious beliefs, practices, teachings and traditions as well as asserting male superiority and attributing abusive behavior to cultural traditions.

These behaviors can occur in any combination, sporadically or chronically, over a period of up to several decades.

Most victims of domestic violence are women in heterosexual relationships. Men in heterosexual relationships can also be victims of domestic violence, in addition to both women and men in same-sex relationships. Regardless of culture, race, religion, or socio-economic class, approximately 90 percent of reported domestic violence cases involve men who abuse women.

¹Elaine J. Alpert, et al. *Responding to Domestic Violence: An Interfaith Guide to Prevention and Intervention*, The Chicago Metropolitan Battered Women's Network, 2005

² "Causes of Domestic Violence", www.allaboutlifechanges.org

³Rev. Joyce Galvin, Domestic Violence Presentations at St. Raymond July 2010