

## How to Create a Safe Work Environment

- ❖ There is no difference between threats of violence occurring at work that come from a partner of an employee, than there is from the threat of violence that comes from a co-worker. How does your company respond to threats of workplace violence?
- ❖ Coordination is key. Work with other resources including Security, Human Resources and EAP.
- ❖ There should be a safety plan for every employee. Make sure they have a phone nearby at all times to be able to call 911. The work area and parking lot should be secure. Make up "code words." Give employees phone numbers to Human Resources.

## Recognize the Signs of Domestic Violence

- Obvious injuries such as bruises, black eyes, broken bones and hearing loss, often attributed to "falls," "being clumsy," or "accidents."
- Clothing inappropriate for the season, such as long sleeves, turtlenecks, sunglasses or heavy makeup.
- Uncharacteristically absent or late; anxious or afraid
- Change in job performance, including poor concentration, errors and inconsistent work quality.
- Emotional distress, crying, depression or suicidal thoughts.
- Minimization and denial of harassment or injuries.
- Insensitive or insulting messages taken by others.
- Disruptive personal visits to the workplace by present/former partner.
- An unusual number of phone calls, faxes or emails from a current or former partner, strong reactions to those calls, and reluctance to respond to messages.

To help or get help call our 24 hour  
hotline  
(716) 692-5643

## An Abuser May Exhibit the Following Behavior

- He may be abusive or bully others at work.
- Blame others for problems, especially the victim.
- May deny problems altogether
- Show "defensive injuries" such as scratch marks.
- Is knowledgeable about the legal system and uses it to their advantage so it appears that they are the victim.
- Is absent or late for court or anything relating to his/her actions toward the victim.
- Calls victim repeatedly during work.

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***An abuser may be "invisible" due to exemplary job performance***

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## How to Respond

### To a victim:

- Gently and indirectly probe the issue:
  - ~ I've noticed you've been distracted lately. You don't seem to "be yourself." I am concerned about you, and am wondering if there is anything I can do to assist you?
- If abuse is acknowledged, accept their reluctance to talk about it. Listening is the first step. It may take several conversations and time before they verbalize the abuse. Be there and be patient.
- Show concern and be supportive:
  - You are not responsible for the abuse
  - You don't deserve the verbal, emotional or physical abuse
  - Listen in a non-judgmental way
  - Do not try to physically intervene, call security or the police
  - Do not tell the person what you think they should do. Respect their ability/responsibility for solving their own problems.

### To an abuser:

- Don't reinforce the behavior in any way
- Maintain that there's no excuse for violence
- Do not try to physically intervene
- Provide information about company & community resources

***Do you think domestic violence affects your workplace?***

- 94% of corporate security directors surveyed rank domestic violence as a high security problem
- 24% of abused women have said they were either late to work or missed days due to abuse
- 15% said abuse affected ability to keep job
- 54% of abused women missed up to three full days of work per month



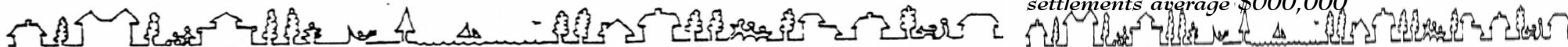
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## Legal Liability

***Employers who are not prepared to respond to DV situations may be liable under any one of several laws:***

- Occupational, safety and health laws
- Family/Medical leaves
- Victim assistance laws
- Federal and state anti-discrimination law

***Jury awards for inadequate security suits average \$1.2 million nationwide with settlements average \$600,000***



## ~ Facts ~

- Domestic violence is a national health concern and it is a primary cause of injury to women in the U.S.
- It does not stay at home when an abused employee goes to work
- Over 7.9 million paid workdays are lost each year due to domestic violence
- 91% of Fortune 1,000 corporate leaders believe that violence against women affects both the private and working lives of employees, yet only 12% surveyed say the corporations should play a role in addressing the issue
- 74% of employees who are victims of domestic violence report being harassed at work by their abusers
- Domestic violence costs businesses \$3 to \$5 billion annually in the U.S.



## What is Domestic Violence

A pattern of coercive behavior in which one person attempts to control another through the threats or actual use of physical violence, sexual assault or psychological abuse. Including:

- Hitting, choking, pushing and slapping
- Forcing someone to stop talking to friends and relatives
- Preventing someone from leaving the house
- Insulting/putting someone down
- Harassing/threatening phone calls

## Examples of Domestic Violence and the Workplace

- Co-workers are aware that an employee's boyfriend carries weapons and has been stalking her at work.
- An office romance begins. After several months, one member of the couple begins to show signs of battering and obtains a restraining order against the other.
- A jealous man believes his wife is having an affair and has threatened to come to her worksite with a weapon.

## How the YWCA of the Tonawandas Can Help

- We offer: individual counseling, support groups, advocacy, transitional housing, babysitting, legal clinic, community, career and parenting education and referrals.
- Guidance in your risk management and domestic violence policies
- Convenient on-site training
- Provide training for employers and employees
- We offer workshops that provide employers with information in regards to domestic violence including:
  - Discussing the impact of domestic violence in the workplace.
  - Showing the significance of creating a policy that addresses domestic violence at work.
  - Discussing New York legislation in regards to the employer's response to domestic violence.
  - Recognizing appropriate management response.
  - Clarifying employee/victim rights under NYS law.
  - Identifying both internal and external resources.

**Fees for training services are  
Affordable & Negotiable**

## Domestic Violence & The Workplace

How is it affecting the  
productivity of your business?



Strategies,  
Tips,  
Facts & Safety  
for all your employees

Presented by:  
**The YWCA of the Tonawanda's  
and the GIFTS Program**

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