

National Bulletin on Domestic Violence Prevention

in this issue:

PTSD and TBI and DV: True or False? 1

Editor's Letters, News, and Notes 2

From the Desk of Andy Klein 3
PTSD and DV victimization

DV in the News 3

DV and the Law by Barbara Hart 5
Foreclosure rights for renters

Student Veteran Health Examined in First-of-Its-Kind Study 6

National Alliance Fights Back Against Women's Shelter Opponents 6

Moms Help Kids Bounce Back from DV Trauma 7

State DV Coalition Spotlight 8
Utah's BLT—Not a sandwich!

PTSD and TBI and DV: True or False?

Domestic violence is increasingly attributed to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) or Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) among veterans who abuse their partners. Such abuse is increasing as more and more military and civilian personnel return from Iraq and Afghanistan. In addition to the U.S. military (Army, Air Force, Navy, or Marines), returnees include members of the U.S. Coast Guard, the National Guard, and even more than 100,000 civilian contractors serving in military theatres.

More often as we read about military domestic violence, we see the violence blamed on the fact that the perpetrator suffers from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) or Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). In fact, the federal government is currently in its second round of funding for a national program to divert traumatized veterans from the courts and prisons based on the belief that treatment is more appropriate than punishment for these perpetrators. In one site, Colorado Springs, it is believed the majority of potential clients will be area military members from areas bases accused of domestic violence. Currently traumatized veteran diversion programs are being funded in Georgia, Massachusetts, Illinois, Connecticut, and Vermont as well as Colorado. Another seven sites will be added later this year or next.

But where should the line be drawn? Not all violence or domestic violence in particular can be attributed to PTSD or TBI, even among veterans of wars. The National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence,

headed by Debby Tucker who served as the Co-Chair of the U.S. Department of Defense Task Force on Domestic Violence from 2000 to 2003, offers some critical guidance for victims, advocates, and those involved with batterer intervention.

First, a quick review.

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder

PTSD is an anxiety disorder that can occur after someone has been through a horrible and frightening event that he or she sees or experiences. During the time of the event, the person thinks that his or her life or others' lives are in danger. The person may feel afraid or helpless. Anyone who has gone through a life-threatening event can develop PTSD. Events can typically include combat or military exposure, including physical or sexual attacks and terroristic acts. They can also include exposure to serious accidents or natural disasters including fire, tornados, hurricanes, floods or quakes. They can include childhood exposure to physical or sexual abuse.

Not everyone exposed to these traumatic events suffer PTSD. Those who suffered exposure to trauma as children may be more likely to experience PTSD after re-experiencing trauma as an adult. Otherwise, developing PTSD depends upon the following: intensity of the trauma, how close the person was to the events or the other persons directly involved in the event, how helpless the person felt, and how much help

continued on page 4

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Editor's Letters, News, and Notes

Probation Association Release Guidelines for DV Response

The American Probation and Parole Association, in partnership with the National Center for State Courts and the New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence, have just released *Community Corrections Response to Domestic Violence: Guidelines for Practice*. Begun almost a decade ago, the project was funded by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.

This document provides a series of guidelines for community corrections professionals that support a proactive community supervision approach for domestic violence cases. It pulls together in one place for community corrections professionals and allied justice system and community-based services the conceptual information and practical tools to develop or enhance effective strategies with the ultimate goals of increased safety and autonomy for victims of domestic violence, heightened accountability for offenders who commit intimate partner violence, and the promotion of changes in offender behavior and thinking patterns.

Sample forms, programs and practices are included as well as rationales for each recommendation made for practitioners. Among the many who advised and contributed to the manual was Andrew Klein, editor of the *National Bulletin on Domestic Violence Prevention*.

To access the guidelines, please visit the following link: <http://www.appa-net.org/eweb/docs/APPA/pubs/CCRDV.pdf>.

Resource:

Klein, A. (June 2009). *Practical Implications of Current Domestic Violence Research: For Law Enforcement, Prosecutors and Judges*. Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/topics/crime/intimate-partner-violence/practical-implications-research/>

The Justice Department has just re-released the *National Bulletin on Domestic Violence Prevention* editor's digest of DV research and its implications for practitioners in a single, integrated electronic work with references hyperlinked to their source documents. The work describes for practitioners what the research tells us about domestic violence, including its perpetrators and victims, the impact of current responses to it, and, more particularly, the implications of that research for day-to-day, real-world responses to domestic violence by law enforcement officers, prosecutors, probation and parole officers, and judges. Volume IV, specifically designed for DV victim advocates and service providers, is promised next.

From the Desk of Andy Klein

PTSD and DV victimization

Dear Reader:

A colleague of mine who was working on a federally funded evaluation of a mental health and substance abuse program in Alaska was warned: You just don't go into the back woods and knock on doors of isolated strange houses, because some of the people in them may have purposely isolated themselves because they know they cannot control their behavior. They may suffer from PTSD or other trauma-induced conditions that feed paranoia and antisocial behavior. Fortunately, it is not difficult to separate yourself from your neighbors across Alaska, the least populated of our frontier states (less than six persons per square mile).

Can you image being married to or trying to maintain a relationship with such an individual? Talk about walking on eggshells!

Although we often think of PTSD in relationship to combat, studies suggest that persons suffering childhood abuse, females who suffer sexual assaults and victims of intimate partner violence may also suffer from PTSD. In fact, one of the widely recognized treatment approaches to PTSD was specifically developed for the treatment of battered women, not men returning from war.

Dr. Edward Kubany, a research psychologist at the National Center for PTSD, developed a brief, psycho-educational intervention for treating PTSD called Cognitive Trauma Therapy (CTT). Its effectiveness has been studied in relationship to ethnically diverse samples of formerly battered women. It was reported to have helped the women who completed the treatment, 88 to 94% of the time. The women were evaluated at three- and six-month intervals. Dr. Kubany has popularized his work in a self-help book called *Healing the Trauma of Domestic Violence: A Workbook for Women*.

The literature tells us that persons suffering from PTSD may suffer from trauma-related guilt. Women who live in abusive households may experience feelings of fear, panic, and anxiety. According to Ann Jones, they may also suffer from feelings of depression and shame because they feel guilty about staying in their current situations.

We also have to train responding police officers and physicians to understand that victims' responses to DV victimization may be impacted by their suffering from PTSD. Prosecutors, too, need to understand this. I remember a case where prosecutors considered charging a victim with perjury because she swore that her court-restrained stalker approached her. A security camera showed he did not. But given her hypersensitivity to the stalker, a common symptom of PTSD, in her perception, she was not deliberately exaggerating at all.

As in her case, we commonly fail to appreciate the devastating impact of stalkers because we fail to appreciate their true impact on their traumatized victims. Police often dismiss stalking as a non-violent nuisance crime. While most specific acts of stalking are not violent, that is not to say stalkers are non-violent. Dollars to donuts, at least in regard to intimate stalkers, violence preceded the stalking and will continue concurrently with the non-violent stalking activities.

As we learn more about PTSD in conjunction with returning military personnel from America's two wars, we should not forget the many victims on the home front also suffering PTSD.

Peace,



Andy is the Senior Research Analyst at Advocates for Human Potential, Inc. and former Chief Probation Officer of the Quincy Court. You can reach Andy at west.quinlan@thomson.com.

DV in the News

Marine charged with domestic violence

A 23-year-old Marine, charged with five counts of DV crimes, was held in jail on \$50,000 bail according to the *News Times*. Prosecutors allege that Hayron Garcialemus committed second-degree assault with a deadly weapon, second-degree assault by strangulation, fourth-degree assault and reckless endangerment and interfered with reporting of DV. Oak Harbor Police responded to a 911 report of a domestic assault. When they arrived, Garcialemus's wife was shaking uncontrollably, and told police that her husband had pinned her down and choked [sic] her. The officer noted scratches and bruising consistent with strangulation. Garcialemus admitted pinning his wife and covering her mouth "because she wouldn't shut up." A few months earlier, Garcialemus allegedly fired a gun in his kitchen. The bullet went through a pantry door, two bathroom walls and into the garage. Garcialemus is a Marine sergeant at Whidbey Island Naval Air Station, according to the base public affairs officer.

Source: *Whidbey News Times* (Washington)

Seattle police released suspect returns to allegedly murder his victim

Seattle police were searching for a 40-year-old murder suspect they released from custody that morning. Around midnight the night before, the police went to his apartment responding to a domestic disturbance call between two male roommates. Police arrested Valente Alvarez-Guerrero, took him to the Precinct station, but released him three hours later. At 7:00 a.m., police were again summoned to the apartment after Alvarez-Guerrero's roommate was found stabbed to death in a building hallway. Questioned, a police spokesperson admitted the department had "some questions as to why" the suspect was released. Washington state law requires officers to book the aggressor in such instances. It is unclear in this case why Alvarez-Guerrero was

not booked into King County Jail. Two officers and a sergeant have been put on administrative reassignment and an investigation is being conducted by the Office of Professional Accountability.

Source: *Slog* (Seattle, Washington)

Ex-boyfriend convicted of drugging, raping, stalking

A Redding man, Mark Gray (42), may be sentenced to more than 20 years in prison after being convicted of 26 felony counts for raping a drugged, unconscious woman and later relentlessly stalking her. The woman was not identified by the Record Searchlight because she's a sexual assault victim. A jury found that Gray repeatedly stalked and harassed the Redding woman at her home, workplace and school for more than a year after their relationship ended in 2007. It was not until after Gray was arrested in 2008, that the victim learned that he had also filmed them having sex without her consent and knowledge after he had drugged her. Gray also was convicted of multiple counts of invasion of privacy by means of a video camera and one count of peeking. He had also filmed his neighbors having sex.

Source: *Redding Record Searchlight* (California)

Cold case conviction of 1995 murder upheld

The Ohio Supreme Court has denied the appeal of former Springboro cop Jim Barton, who was convicted in connection with the death of his wife in 2005. His wife had been murdered a decade earlier. Barton's was the first "cold case" the Warren County Sheriff's Office ever pursued and the local prosecutor had ever convicted. Barton was convicted of hiring thugs to stage a botched robbery to scare his wife into moving to another town where he could become police chief. Instead the hired robbers raped and killed her. Barton was sentenced to 15 to 50 years in prison for involuntary manslaughter and complicity to aggravated burglary.

Source: *Lebanon Western Star* (Ohio)

continued from page 1

and support the person received following the event.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

TBI occurs if the head is subject to a blow or violent shaking caused, for example, by an explosion or blast. While the resulting concussion may not be life threatening, it can result in subsequent serious symptoms. Like professional football players, persons who experience multiple concussions may have greater likelihood of suffering TBI. While the injured persons may not perceive how badly they are affected, they may suffer a host of serious symptoms, including difficulty organizing daily tasks; tiring easily; being easily irritated or angry; being unable to concentrate or remember things; being more sensitive to stimuli like sound, lights, or normal distractions; being impulsive; having impaired decision-making and problem-solving abilities; and feeling overwhelmed.

How to Assess PTSD or TBI and DV

As Tucker cautions, notwithstanding the causation, perpetrators of domestic violence should be held accountable and the victim supported and assisted to ensure her future safety. However, the *source* of the conduct should be identified, as it should dictate how we intervene. For example, as she argues, it will do no good to send an untreated, brain-injured former soldier to a battering intervention and prevention program without addressing the underlying cause. However, it is essential that domestic violence not be attributed inappropriately to PTSD or TBI. Tucker offers some simple tests.

1. **Determine if the conduct is new.** Is the behavior new? Or did it occur before the injury or the exposure to combat or other traumatic events? On the

other hand, not all new abuse post release from the military is trauma related. In the movie *Jarheads*, for example, a soldier convinces himself that his wife is cheating on him and is abusive upon his return although he wasn't before.

2. **Determine if there have been any other incidents where violence was used.** PTSD or TBI behavior is not selective, confined to DV only. For example, one of the soldiers charged with a domestic homicide at Fort Campbell (which helped convince the military it had a DV problem) had also assaulted a gas station attendant over the costs of filling his truck.
3. **Look for avoidance behaviors.** Those suffering from PTSD try to avoid situations or experiences that pull them back in reliving the original trauma. As a result, look to see if other behavior has changed since military release, not just abusive behavior.
4. **Determine if the behavior is becoming more pronounced.** Those who seek to achieve and maintain power and control over others escalate the behavior when challenged. The progression of the use of tactics is predictable and linear for most batterers, and is not a symptom of PTSD or TBI.

Finally, Tucker advises that whether or not an individual suffers the effects of brain injury or PTSD, he may also be using alcohol or drugs. He may require treatment for drug or alcohol addiction as part of any intervention strategy.

Source: Tucker, D. (April, 2009). "Domestic Violence, PTSD and Brain Injury...Military and Civilian Challenges," *Michigan Family Law Journal*, 39 (4). Part I.

DV and the Law by Barbara Hart

Foreclosure rights for renters

40% of families affected by mortgage foreclosures in the U.S. are renters (<http://www.nlihc.org>)—an astounding percentage. The number of battered women who are at risk for displacement due to foreclosure is unknown. Nonetheless, reports from legal services and shelters reveal that survivors are increasingly confronting the loss of permanent housing through foreclosure.

In response to the outcry by tenants and organizations advocating for housing justice, Congress recently enacted “The Protecting Tenants at Foreclosure Act” (PTFA), Public Law No. 111-22, § 702-703 (Senate Bill 896). This federal law protects most tenants from immediate eviction by owners of residential property acquired in foreclosure after May 20, 2009.

The Congressional Record contains the following comment of Senator Gillibrand: “This amendment would allow any tenants in a foreclosed building the right to live out their lease, providing them with the same protections any other renter would have. For a family without a lease, the amendment would guarantee a minimum of 90 days’ notice so that renters have the time and the resources to find a new home.”

PTFA preempts state and local laws that are less protective of tenants.

For example, under most state laws, renters’ rights are automatically terminated upon foreclosure. PTFA overrides state law as to the protections articulated therein.

However, state or local laws that are more protective of tenants supersede PTFA. About 15 state legislatures are now considering bills that would accord tenants greater rights.

Pursuant to PTFA, “bona fide” tenants may occupy their residences until the end of their lease terms. (A bona fide tenant is one who is not the mortgagor or a member of the mortgagor’s family, who became a tenant as the result of an arm’s length transaction, and whose rent is not substantially lower than fair market rent or is reduced or subsidized by federal, state or local funding. This includes tenants in “rent control” leases.) The PTFA does not condition these protections on the immigration status of the tenant. Virtually all residential, rental properties are covered by PTFA.

There are limited exceptions to the PTFA. Tenants must continue to pay rent in a timely fashion to retain the protections of PTFA; otherwise they are subject to state law whereby a landlord can demand rent or give notice to quit for failure to pay. If a new owner acquires a residence through foreclosure and wants it as a primary residence, that landlord may terminate the lease before its expiration.

Tenants are entitled to at least 90 days’ notice of eviction. The landlord must provide notice of termination at least 90 days prior to the end of a tenant’s lease. If there is less than 90 days remaining on the lease, a 90-day notice of eviction is still required. An owner desiring to move into the home obtained through foreclosure must similarly give the tenant 90 days’ notice to quit.

The new owner may not pursue eviction of a tenant until he/she holds a clear title to the rental property.

Tenants with Section 8 voucher leases are entitled to continuation of their leases, and new owners automatically become a party to Section 8 contracts. Foreclosure is not a lawful reason to terminate Section 8 leases.

Now is the time for all good advocates to spread the word about PTFA and to consider amendments to state law that accord additional protections to tenants. See “State Laws and Legislation to Ensure Housing Rights for Survivors of Domestic and Sexual Violence” and “Without Just Cause: A 50-State Review of the (Lack of) Rights of Tenants in Foreclosure” as you formulate progressive legislative proposals. (<http://www.nlchp.org>)

GPS monitoring of abuser fails to deter stalker

Cesar Torres, 46, became the first offender to get caught by Operation Exclusion Zone, a new electronic tracking program designed to stop domestic abusers from getting too close to their victims. He was revealed to be lurking outside her workplace. When he got within 89 feet of her job, his ankle bracelet set off a signal via a Global Positioning Satellite being monitored by a Denver-based agency, Rocky Mountain Offender Management, which then contacted New York City Police. He was arrested and held on \$5,000 bail. The violation should not have come as much of a surprise. He had been arrested five times previously for violating his stay-away order since the spring before. However, rather than imprison him, the court ordered him to wear the ankle bracelet so that he could continue to stalk his victim. Torres is one of 30 abusers outfitted with bracelets under the Queens-based program, which begun in February 2008.

Source: *Daily News* (New York)

Nine strikes and then out

Finally, 28-year-old Scott McAlpin was held accountable. A Contra Costa jury found him guilty of strangling his ex-girlfriend to death. Before that, he had nine protective orders against him and nine felony convictions for beating and threatening her. He beat and strangled her four days after his release from jail for abusing her. Although she had left him, authorities said that when his threats got too scary, she would go to him “so as not to stir his anger.” Notwithstanding his nine felony convictions, he had never been sent to state prison. So much for three strikes!

Source: *San Francisco Chronicle* (California)

Unserved orders prompt call for new laws

After several murders of Little Rock victims who had gotten courts to issue protective orders that were then never served by police, Arkansas legislators are considering strengthening state DV laws, including making

the third violations of orders a felony. Of course, if the orders aren't served, they can't be violated. From 2000 to 2005, 116 women were slain in Arkansas in domestic-related assaults, an average of 19.3 per year.

Source: *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* (Little Rock, Arkansas)

Airline drinks made him do it

A husband and wife are suing United Airlines for over serving alcohol during a flight from Osaka, Japan, to San Francisco, claiming it led to the husband assaulting his wife shortly after their plane landed. The husband was arrested for disorderly conduct and battery after he struck his wife six times, injuring her face and upper lip as they were heading through U.S. Customs in San Francisco. He was subsequently convicted and placed on probation. While bars may be held responsible for serving inebriated customers, it is unclear whether airlines count as flying bars. Even so, most over-service suits are by filed by injured third parties, not the patron who asked for the drinks. Further, the over-service occurred over international waters, while the assault occurred in the United States. And the couple must prove that the alcohol was responsible, something many DV experts would deny.

Source: *Chicago Tribune* (Illinois)

To serve and protect . . . not

A Milwaukee County sheriff's deputy was arrested for a double shooting, wounding the mother of his child and a 12-year-old neighbor girl. The girl was a neighbor she had run to in order to escape the deputy. Intimate partner violence is not new to the deputy. His ex-wife had secured a protective order against him two years earlier for threats to kill and make it his life's mission to hurt her. He also had been arrested in 2002 for DV but the charges had been dropped. Why was this man still a deputy sheriff?

Source: *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* (Wisconsin)

Student Veteran Health Examined in First-of-its-Kind Study

Survey finds student military veterans face some unique health issues

As a result of the new GI Bill, more veterans will be entering college and university across the country. To ensure that its student veterans' unique needs will be met, the University of Minnesota and Minnesota State Colleges and Universities conducted a first-of-its-kind comprehensive report, "Health and Health-Related Behaviors: Minnesota Postsecondary Student Veterans." The report is based on surveys of veterans entering state schools.

The report found that student veterans experienced higher rates of some mental health issues and sexual assault (most notably among females). However, they did not differ substantially from the general student population in most measures of overall health.

As summarized by Ed Ehlinger, the director and chief health officer of the University of Minnesota Boynton Health Service, "We found that in most respects, the veterans look like the rest of the student population."

In spring 2008, 1,901 veterans enrolled in 15 Minnesota colleges and universities. A little less than half responded to surveys about their health. The survey found that, while similar to the general student population, veteran students do have some unique health needs. For example, student veterans have unique psychological issues related to their military service that impacts their mental health. Among male veterans, 9.1% reported post-traumatic stress disorder, compared with 2.8% of comparable non-veteran male students. Among female veterans, 14.1% reported post-trau-

matic stress disorder compared with just 5.4% of comparable non-veteran female students.

Most alarming, the study found that 43.7% of female veteran students reported having been sexually assaulted in their lifetime, compared with 29.8% of comparable non-veteran female students. When asked if they were sexually assaulted within the past 12 months, 6% of female veterans said they had been compared with 3.9% of comparable non-veteran female students.

"Sexual and domestic violence is a big issue for female veterans," Ehlinger said. "This is one area that is markedly different from the comparable non-veteran female students."

In other parts of the study, researchers found that veteran students are better immunized and more physically fit compared with the general student population. They do not drink or abuse drugs more than their peers.

"These survey findings underscore the importance of having campus veterans centers around the state," said Steven Frantz, system director of students services for the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities. "Veterans have unique needs, and the veterans centers provide a place that can address some of those issues and support their success in higher education."

The report may be downloaded at <http://www.bhs.umn.edu/healthdata/results>.

Source: University News Service (Minnesota)

National Alliance Fights Back Against Women's Shelter Opponents

There have been multiple lawsuits brought by anti-feminist "men's rights" groups against battered women's shelters and the state agencies that fund them in the United States. The plaintiffs charge reverse discrimination because the shelters are often tailored for bat-

tered women. They bring up the usual, asserting that women are as violent as men, therefore they are as needy when it comes to shelters.

So far, these lawsuits have failed, although a recent case in California was partly successful. Of course, even when the suits are lost, the plaintiffs drain time and money from service providers and state funders.

To assist those defending shelters and their funders, the Jewish Women International's National Alliance to End Domestic Violence sponsored a teleconference last month that explained the history and nature of these lawsuits and explored the legal concept of equal protection in order to better protect defendants against such lawsuits without compromising the quality and integrity of services they provide.

The conference featured suits brought by so-called men's rights groups in Minnesota, two in California, Maine and West Virginia, the latter is still ongoing. **Dr. Molly Dragiewicz**, an Assistant Professor of Criminology, Justice & Policy Studies at the University of Ontario Institute of Technology in Canada, led the discussion long with **Nancy Lemon, J.D.**, a UC Berkeley Law lecturer, and leading authority on domestic violence for more than 20 years. Dragiewicz has published articles about the anti-feminist fathers' rights movement, the California equal protection lawsuit, and is currently completing a book on the suit in Minnesota. Ms. Lemon wrote the first legal textbook on Domestic Violence and the Law.

The conferences was co-sponsored by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), the largest membership organization of professional social workers in the world with 152,000 members and 56 chapters in the United States and abroad.

Moms Help Kids Bounce Back from DV Trauma

More than 10 million U.S. children witness domestic violence yearly yet some suffer less than others as

a result. A longitudinal study, conducted by Michigan State University researchers published in *Child Development*, suggests why.

It compared 100 children who were two through four years old who witnessed domestic violence against their moms and compared then with 70 kids who hadn't been exposed to DV. As expected, the kids who witnessed abuse were four times more likely to suffer emotional or behavioral problems. Children as young as one year can exhibit trauma symptoms after being exposed to domestic violence. But a little over half of the children exposed to domestic violence in the study did as well as the kids who had not been exposed to DV. They proved remarkably resilient.

Why?

Generally, the research suggests that a number of characteristics are associated with resilience, including a positive and supportive caregiver-child relationship, structured and warm parenting, positive caregiver mental health, child easy/engaging temperament, and a child's higher cognitive ability as well as lower levels of risk including less parental psychopathology, life stress, poverty and being a member of a majority ethnic group.

However, for children exposed to DV, two factors were associated with resilience. Maternal depression and child's easy temperament emerged as significant predictors of resilience. Researchers reasoned that mothers with good mental health are more likely to model appropriate responses to stressful events and help their children achieve healthy emotional regulation. Dv exposed children with easy temperaments are "also more likely to display positive adaptation, as their lower reactivity, high adaptability, and positive mood might promote the development of self-regulatory competence and elicit positive responses from their caregivers and other adults." Researchers found that positive parenting, child cognitive ability, stressful life events, income and race did not significantly predict children's adaptation.

Court to decide if ex-spouses may sue for turning children against parents

Should parents be allowed to sue their ex-spouses for turning their children against them? So far, New Jersey trial court judges have split on the issue, so the appellate court will decide. In Morris County, a superior court judge dismissed a complaint by a retired multimillionaire developer against his former common-law wife, saying, "New Jersey law simply does not allow recovery for the causes of action Segal asserts." He cited a 1935 law that abolished alienation of affection as grounds for a lawsuit. However, in Jersey City, another superior court judge found the alienation claim barred by the 1935 law pertained only to the marital relationship, not the children, and that a parent's claim of emotional distress resulting from being alienated from his children could be pursued in civil court. In the latter case, a man sued his ex-wife and her parents, accusing them of lying to his two daughters and making allegations of sexual misconduct and molestation.

Source: *The Star-Ledger* (New Jersey)

Army drops DV case

After Sgt Carlos Renteria's second brutal attack on his wife since returning from Iraq to San Angelo, Texas, the Army promised it would hold Renteria accountable after he was arrested. Instead, he was redeployed to Iraq and promoted to staff sergeant. For nearly two years, his wife tried to get the military to do something, including counseling for her husband. She finally divorced him. The civilian prosecutor in the case was so concerned by the Army's inaction that last May, he moved to take back the case, issuing an arrest warrant for the sergeant's arrest. The Army's response to domestic violence is especially critical now, as more soldiers suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder because of the wars. Studies show a link between the disorder and increased violence in the home.

Source: *New York Times* (New York)

In short, children with easy-going natures and mentally healthy mothers were less likely to be stressed out and received support from their mothers who helped them cope. “Taken together, these findings underscore the differences in how children adapt and highlight the importance of individual and family resources to face the challenges of growing up in a highly detrimental environment,” according to Cecilia Martinez-Torteya, the study’s lead author. “Intervention efforts may be improved by targeting mothers’ symptoms of depression and considering children’s temperaments.”

The study was supported by the National Institute of Justice and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Source: Martinez-Torteya, C., Bogat, G., von Eye, A., & Levendosky, A. (March/April 2009). “Resilience Among Children Exposed to Domestic Violence: The Role of Risk and Protective Factors,” *Child Development*, 80 (2), 562-577.

State DV Coalition Spotlight

Utah’s BLT—Not a sandwich!

By Susan R. Paisner

Definition: DV 101—the domestic violence advocate’s shorthand for an introductory class on the dynamics of domestic violence.

The Utah Domestic Violence Council/UDVC (the state’s official domestic violence coalition) believes heart and soul in providing as many DV 101 classes as is humanly possible.

One of its core courses is called BLT, or Basic Live Training. UDVC travels around the state, using a standardize curriculum and bringing in experts from the field as trainers where needed. This year, they will offer the 3-day training nine times.

They provide this low-cost training (just \$50) to a multi-disciplinary group of people—shelter advocates, law enforcement officers, child welfare workers, management from the state’s Division of Child and Family Services. “It’s wide open,” said Judy Kasten Bell, the Council’s Executive Director. “It’s very well received for people who are entering the field, such as those working in law enforcement who haven’t had a lot of information about domestic violence. This is becoming an excellent low-cost resource to them.”

Mandatory Training

In Utah, anyone providing any domestic violence treatment must be licensed, which requires 24 hours of training the first year and 16 hours each year thereafter. The three-day BLT offers 21 hours of training, nearly fulfilling the first requirement and going well past the second. The Council also offers a Web-based training—four hours of credit through the National Association of Social Workers—which costs only \$20.

“Our goal is to reach as many first responders across all the fields who are wanting to understand better,” said Kasten Bell, “so anybody can take that online course and get some good information on what domestic violence is and the impact it has on communities.”

All UDVC trainings include an evaluation component, and Kasten Bell notes that overall the responses fall in the “extremely high positive” category.

Another prominent part of the Council’s training component is their course for faith leaders. In a poll conducted by Dan Jones and Associates, Inc., 1,000 women in Utah were asked: “If you need help with domestic violence, where would you turn first?” While 36% said family members, the next category was faith leaders, at 21%.

“Faith leaders are some of the first responders to domestic violence, so we want them to be aware

of what domestic violence is and the appropriate way of responding,” said Kasten Bell. The Council works with 22 domestic violence organizations in the state; frequently the local coalition in a community will arrange for their faith leaders to receive training. While the course includes DV 101, it also focuses specifically on the role of the faith leader in providing religion-related support. Here’s an excerpt:

Faith leaders who are knowledgeable about issues of abuse can help victims:

- *Keep their faith alive.*
- *Strengthen their connection to the faith community by holding abusers accountable for their violence and insisting they get help.*
- *Understand through teaching and interpretation that no scripture actually endorses violence against one’s spouse, parent, or child.*

The faith leader training manual is also on the Council’s website, making it readily and easily accessible.

So, why provide all this training? As Caren Withers, UDVC Chair, said: “The vision of the Council is a world where everyone lives free from fear.” Kasten Bell said that when advocates and first responders understand more about the subject, they can hone their effectiveness. She also pointed out that by delivering training all over the state, “people in local communities will be aware that there *are* resources and there *are* places to go for help.”

“Our mission,” said Kasten Bell, “is to make domestic violence intolerable in our state of Utah, and we can only do that when communities recognize that it does exist in their neighborhoods and they want to put an end to it.”

For more information about these trainings and others, go to www.udvc.org.

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