

# EXPLORING THE ECONOMIC CONSTRAINTS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

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# Domestic Violence in Washington, DC

- In 2010, the Metropolitan Police Department received 31,000+ domestic-related calls – approximately 1 every 17 minutes.
- Local Domestic Violence agencies served more than 30,000 victims in 2010
- In 2010, the number of 18-21 year olds served at the DVIC/DVIC-SE increased by almost 25%.
- The Crime Victims Compensation (CVC) program paid over \$4 million to victims of domestic violence alone in 2010. Almost 60% of this money went to pay for emergency shelter/safe housing for victims fleeing abuse.
- In 2010, almost half of the approximately \$9 million in payments to victims by the Crime Victims Compensation program went to victims of domestic violence.

# Exploring the Economic Constraints of Domestic Violence

- ❑ **Domestic violence can create serious obstacles that prevent victims from achieving economic security and self-sufficiency.**
- ❑ **Controlling and limiting the victim's access to financial resources ensures that the victim will be financially limited if he/she chooses to leave the relationship.**
- ❑ **Domestic violence survivors are often forced to choose between staying in an abusive relationship or facing economic hardship, extreme poverty and homelessness.**

# Exploring the Economic Constraints of Domestic Violence

- Between 35% and 56% of victims of intimate partner violence are harassed at work by their abusers
- Over 1.75 million workdays are lost as a result of domestic violence each year
- Domestic violence results in \$3 to \$5 billion lost annually in absenteeism, decreased productivity, and health and safety costs.
- Between 1/4 and 1/2 of domestic violence victims report that they have lost a job due to domestic violence.
- Economic abuse occurs across all socio-economic levels
- It is currently estimated the economically abused elderly rate is 1 in 25 cases, suggesting that there may be at least 5 million financially abused elderly victims each year.

# Economic Tactics of Domestic Violence

- ❑ Interfering with the victim's work performance through harassing activities, such as frequent phone calls or unannounced visits
- ❑ Denying the victim access to money or the means of obtaining it, to the point that he/she is entirely dependent on the abuser for food, clothing and shelter
- ❑ Refusing to allow the victim to work or attend school, or engaging in activities that make it impossible for the victim to do so

# Economic Tactics of Domestic Violence

- ❑ Stealing from the victim, defrauding their money or assets, and/or exploiting the victim's financial resources or property for personal gain
- ❑ Requiring justification for any money spent and punishing the victim with physical, sexual or emotional abuse
- ❑ Stealing or destroying the victim's personal belongings

# Economic Tactics of Domestic Violence

- ❑ Forbidding a victim from maintaining a personal bank account
- ❑ Threatening to out an LGBTQ victim in their workplace
- ❑ Refusing to pay the victim court-ordered child or spousal support
- ❑ Forcing their victim to obtain credit, then ruining the victim's credit rating or future ability to obtain credit.

# What to Tell a Survivor

- ▣ Keep your personal and financial records in a safe location. Leave copies with a trusted friend, relative or in a bank safety deposit box.
- ▣ Compile an emergency evacuation box with copies of your family's important records and documents.

# What to Tell A Survivor

- ▣ Keep copies of car and house keys in your wallet, along with extra money and emergency phone numbers.
- ▣ Take a financial inventory.
- ▣ If partner controls the money, look for ways to find out more about his/her income, financial property, real property and debts.

# What to Tell a Survivor

- ❑ When thinking about leaving find out what it would cost you to live alone, and consider starting to set aside money, even if it's just a few dollars, and keep it safe.
- ❑ Access the IRS Innocent Spouse Relief
- ❑ Obtain a copy of credit report from any of the three major credit bureaus, review the information, and report any fraud, disputed claims, or identity theft.