



Celebrating more than 25 years of
Giving Victims a Voice & Families a Future
Women's Crisis & Family Outreach Center

The Women's Crisis & Family Outreach Center offers essential support and shelter to victims of domestic violence. We can provide you with safe shelter, legal advocacy, therapy, career and educational resources, food, housing and clothing assistance, and many other support services. We strive to empower and educate so that the choices you make for your future are positive, self-affirming and non-violent.

P. O. Box 367, Castle Rock, Colorado 80104
303-688-1094 Admin Ph. 303-660-8889 Facsimile
303-688-8484 Crisis Line (24-Hr, TTY Available) www.twcfoc.org
1-888-247-7472 Toll Free



The Awakening...

A time comes in your life when you finally get it. . . when, in the midst of all your fears and insanity, you stop dead in your tracks and somewhere the voice inside your head cries out - ENOUGH! Enough fighting, crying, and struggling to hold on. Like a child quieting down after a blind tantrum, your sobs begin to subside, you shudder once or twice, blink back your tears and begin to look at the world through new eyes. This is your awakening. And now you come to realize that the strength it takes to hang on is far greater than the pain of letting go.

The Women's Crisis & Family Outreach Center offers essential support and shelter to victims of domestic violence regardless of gender. We understand the manipulation and control that has stolen your life and caused you to feel dependent, worthless, hopeless and ashamed. It is our commitment to give you alternatives to the abusive situation you (and your children) feel trapped in.

Definitions of Abuse

BATTERING is defined as a pattern of behaviors that harm, gain or maintain coercive power and control over another person and specifically between family members. These behaviors include physical, emotional, psychological and sexual abuse.

PHYSICAL ABUSE- including but not limited to: punching, hitting, slapping, beating, strangling, pushing, grabbing, shoving, throwing objects, driving recklessly, use of weapons, kidnapping, kicking, wrestling, pinching, pulling hair, squeezing, and burning.

SEXUAL ABUSE - any sexually abusive behavior, verbal or physical. This may include being made to watch sexual acts such as pornography, being made to touch someone (or self) in a sexual way when you do not want to, or having someone sexually touch you when you do not want them to – including sexual intercourse.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE - Emotional abuse is defined as any behavior that takes advantage of another's vulnerability, insecurity, or character. This includes but is not limited to: verbal attacks, name calling, put-downs, accusations of affairs, financial abuse, destroying property (punching out walls or destroying furniture in an effort to scare family members), twisting words and events, blaming the victim for the abuse or making light of the abuse. These are isolating and controlling behaviors.

VERBAL ABUSE: Verbal abuse is defined as using demeaning words or statements towards someone with the goal of making them feel badly or inadequate.

If any of these definitions of abuse fit into your relationship, you are a victim of domestic violence. It is not the degree of visible injury that defines an abusive act but the existence of the behavior.



The Cycle of Abuse

THE CYCLE OF ABUSE HAS THREE PHASES .

1. Tension Building – This is the stage that many victims describe as “walking on eggshells.” In this stage, the abuser becomes increasingly agitated, jealous, verbally abusive and begins to show signs that there may be a physical assault. During this escalation, the victim tries to manage the tension and is often nurturing and compliant, covering up and making excuses for the abusive behavior to friends and family. The victim accepts blame for any problems and tries to do better – anything to keep peace.

2. Acute Battering Incident – In this stage, the abuser’s tension has reached a level when a physical assault occurs. The victim will continue to manage the abuse. This battering incident may be mild or severe in nature.

3. Loving, Remorseful, Re-bonding – The victim and abuser both welcome this phase. Abusers may be extremely loving and kind and may beg for forgiveness, promise to change or convince the victim and everyone else that they mean it. . . at the same time, abusers feel they have taught the victim a lesson. The abuser and victim may minimize the abuse and the abuser may begin to make the abuse the victim’s fault. The victim wants to believe the abuser is really going to change and things will be better. This pattern may vary and occur many times throughout the relationship. The victim may also try to manage the escalation by inciting the abuse- all in an effort to get the abuse overwith.

PHASE 1 Tension Building

PHASE 2 Acute Battering Incident

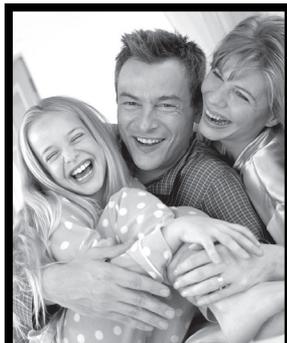
PHASE 3 Loving, Remorseful, Re-bonding

Notes:

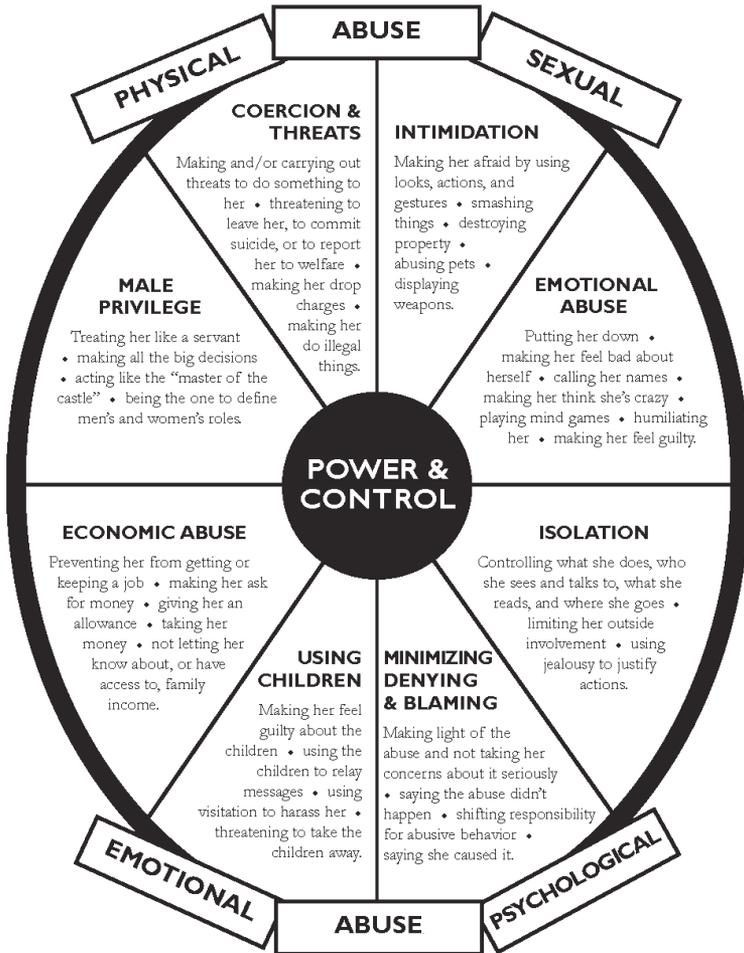
Methods of Power and Control

METHODS OF POWER AND CONTROL

- 1. Use of degrading statements** - Any verbal attack, although it may not seem like an attack at the time, which causes the victim to feel ignorant, incompetent, or like a child is one example of power and control. This degrading may include statements like: "What is the matter with you? How could you be so stupid? Why did you do that?", "You idiot!"
- 2. Creating guilt** - Any type of degrading to create guilt and make the victim constantly and consistently "try harder" to appease the abuser is another example of power and control. This can generally be noticed by the number of times the victim apologizes for something that has disturbed or inconvenienced the abuser.
- 3. Crazy making** - This is accomplished through double messages, manipulation and a number of other communication methods that cause the victim to question themselves and feel unstable.
- 4. Distrust** - In a variety of ways, the abuser may point out how the victim can't be trusted. The victim may question themselves, and their motives. This creates self-doubt and makes it difficult for the victim to trust.
- 5. Refocus the "problem"** – The abuser deflects his/her problems onto the victim. It might be helpful to look at this as similar to a game. In most games the players are equally prepared and informed of the rules and responsibilities involved. In playing this game however, the abuser is the game designer and rule maker. As long as the abuser remains master of the game and the victim is kept distracted and confused, the abuser is the winner.
- 6. Jealousy** - This is acted out -- sometimes with anger or sometimes by withdrawal, criticism of, or pouting toward anyone who supports the victim. This includes friends, family and any source of strength to the victim.
- 7. Keeping you from sleep** - This is done through night awakenings, late bedtime hours, or anything else done to keep you (the victim) from resting peacefully at night. When sleep is interrupted, the ability to think is weakened.



Power and Control Wheel



The **POWER & CONTROL WHEEL** symbolizes the various kinds of abuse that can occur within a violent relationship. The inside circle represents power and control. This is the core of an abusive relationship, to maintain power and control within the relationship. The next pieces of the wheel are the spokes, which represent the different types of abuse that can occur to maintain the ultimate goal of power and control. Each piece of the wheel solidifies the perpetrator's power and control over the victim.

Duluth Model

Methods of Power and Control (cont'd)

It's all about CONTROL

Abusers are: unrealistic with impossible goals, trusting of self but distrusting of others, uncaring about the feelings of others, lacking empathy, intrusive, invasive, and prone to using others for personal gain. The following are some examples of patterns of abusers as reported to counselors, working with abused victims, as documented by NCADV (National Coalition Against Domestic Violence).

_____ **Ingratiating** - phony friendliness to other people or excessive phony interest in another's opinion, usually done to manipulate others.

_____ **Fragmentation** - various parts of an abusive person's life don't seem to match; public opinion is not consistent with private behavior (abusive one night and goes to church in the morning).

_____ **Minimization** - abuser tries to make his/her own behavior less important, or make the impact of the behavior seem less serious. This is another way of denying responsibility (saying it was a joke or I didn't really hurt you).

Patterns in abusers as documented by the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence:

_____ **Vagueness** - being unclear and not specific to avoid being found out or taking responsibility (I know I'm late, but I had things to do).

_____ **Anger** - abusive people aren't necessarily angrier than anybody else, but they use anger and angry behavior to intimidate and control others. They often express anger in threatening ways to gain control over a situation (If you leave me, I'll kill you).

_____ **Power Plays** - using dramatic tactics to regain control of a situation when they aren't getting their way. This may include leaving, threatening, ignoring, screaming, or trying dramatics to make others feel guilty.

_____ **Ownership** - justification for taking other people's belongings; an attitude of "If I want it, then I deserve it. It's mine and I can do what I please with it." This includes considering people as possessions.

_____ **Exaggerated self-image** - many chronically abusive people think of themselves as strong, superior, independent and self-sufficient, but only on the surface. They are weak and insecure on the inside, and feel that the rules are not made for them. This thinking allows them to avoid personal responsibility.

_____ **Excuse-making** - justifying inappropriate behavior instead of accepting responsibility, especially when confronted by others.

_____ **Justifying** - attempting to explain behavior as unavoidable or caused by factors outside their control (after sexual abuse, saying "You know you wanted it.")

_____ **Lying** - used to maintain control over information, to confuse others and gain advantage. An abusive person often creates confusion and uncertainty for other people with a complex pattern of themes and variations. Lie and appear to be lying, lie and appear to be truthful, and truth appears to be a lie.

_____ **Making fools of others** - agreeing to do things with no intention of follow-through, setting other people up, getting others upset to see a reaction, and taking advantage of others.

_____ **Assuming** - believing that they know the intentions of others: what others are thinking, feeling, doing and saying. This allows them to justify their own behaviors based on what they assume.

Why do victims stay in abusive relationships?

Victims may stay because they see no way out. Victims are often dependent on the abuser emotionally, economically and physically. Domestic violence victims may feel unable to support themselves and their children and have frequently been threatened with harm to self, family or friends if they leave. Repeated physical beatings, verbal abuse, emotional manipulation and control eventually leads to overwhelming feelings of helplessness. Victims may stay because they are afraid to leave and feel trapped in the cycle of abuse. Last but not least, victims may stay because they love the offender and believe things will get better.

What can you do prior to a violent incident?

_____ Know how to identify your partner's level of escalation so you can assess danger to yourself and your children.

_____ Whenever possible, plan to leave before the violence occurs, or when partner is not around.

“Strength does not come from winning. Your struggles develop your strengths. When you go through hardships and decide not to surrender, that is strength.”
~ Anonymous



Characteristics...

Common characteristics of an abusive partner

- _____ Witnessed abuse between parents
- _____ Was a victim of abuse as a child
- _____ Extremely fearful of losing partner
- _____ Believes that expressing feelings indicates weakness
- _____ Turns hurt, fear, loss, and/or guilt into anger
- _____ Has low self-esteem
- _____ Blames other for own actions
- _____ Demonstrates extreme jealousy of partners friends, family and activities outside the relationship
- _____ Has great difficulty trusting anyone
- _____ Isolates self and seldom has close relationships outside of immediate family
- _____ Alternates between extreme passivity and extreme aggression
- _____ Does not feel own violent behavior should have consequences
- _____ Believes that the world is a hostile place where aggression is necessary for survival
- _____ Is abusive toward animals
- _____ Tends to use force or violence to solve their problems
- _____ Abuses alcohol and/or other drugs
- _____ Goes through extreme highs and lows as though two different people
- _____ Exhibits a lack of ability to nurture other people
- _____ Usually has unrealistic expectations of marriage or relationships, believing that they will provide security and permanence; also believes the relationship is the responsibility of the partner - problems are not own fault
- _____ Unable to handle stress in constructive ways
- _____ Often has conflicts with spouse over parenting, believing that children need more discipline
- _____ Is socially isolated
- _____ Strives to maintain power and control

When we live life centered around what others like, feel, and say, we lose touch with our own identity, [I am an eternal being...] am an individual with purpose...
~ Neva Coyle, Daily thoughts on Living Free

Physical Abuse- Checklist

Does your partner:

- _____ push or shove you?
- _____ hold you to keep you from leaving?
- _____ slap or bite you?
- _____ kick or choke you?
- _____ hit or punch you?
- _____ throw objects at you?
- _____ lock you out of your house?
- _____ abandon you in dangerous places?
- _____ refuse to help you when your sick?
- _____ deny a chronic illness you have?
- _____ subject you to reckless driving?
- _____ force you off the road or keep you from driving?
- _____ rape you?
- _____ threaten to hurt you with a weapon?

None of these behaviors are acceptable!

Indicators of Abuse - Checklist

- _____ grew up in a violent family?
- _____ tends to use force or violence to “solve” problems?
- _____ abuses alcohol or drugs?
- _____ thinks poorly of himself/herself?
- _____ has strong traditional ideas about gender roles?
- _____ is jealous of other people in your life?
- _____ plays with guns, knives, or other lethal weapons?
- _____ expects you to follow orders or advice?
- _____ goes through extreme highs and lows?

Do You Have a Safety Plan?

What can you do during a violent incident?

- _____ Leave the presence of the batterer, if possible.
- _____ Call 911 or your local domestic violence shelter.
- _____ Have your children get to a phone and call if you can't.
- _____ Scream so neighbors will hear.
- _____ If you are leaving by car, lock doors immediately and do not unlock until you reach a safe destination.
- _____ Check self and children for injuries; if necessary go to hospital.
- _____ If you cannot leave, protect yourself to the best of your ability.

Safety When Preparing to Leave

Preparing to leave can be the most dangerous time!

- Have a place to stay.
- Call a domestic violence victim service program or shelter. Keep this information available at all times.
- Keep originals, copies or photocopies of important documents that you may need in order to apply for assistance, such as:
 - Identification
 - Birth certificates (self & children)
 - Social Security Cards (self & children)
 - School & Vaccination Records
 - Money
 - Checks, ATM card, Credit Cards, (open up your own checking/savings account, if able)
 - Keys (house, car, work)
 - Drivers License & Registration
 - Welfare identification, work permits, green card
 - Passport (self & children)
 - Medical Records
 - Divorce Papers
 - Insurance Papers
 - Lease/Mortgage Papers
 - Passwords for accounts
 - Address book
- Obtain calling cards
- Have clothing, personal items and medications for yourself and your children ready to go.
- Have some of your children's favorite toys or blankets if possible.
- Take pictures or items of sentimental value, only if it safe to do so.
- If you need to go back to your residence after leaving, do so with a police escort.

Do You Have a Safety Plan? (cont'd)

- _____ Do you have the number to the local domestic violence shelter?
- _____ Is your employer aware not to speak to your partner unless they have spoken to you first?
- _____ Do you have copies of important documents in a safe place (driver's license, social security cards, birth certificates, insurance cards, bank accounts, pay stubs, monthly bills, documents showing mutually owned property, etc.)?
- _____ Have you set aside a small amount of money?
- _____ Do you have extra sets of keys to your car and home in a safe place?
- _____ Have you secured valuables or items of importance?
- _____ Are you aware of how to obtain a restraining order, and/or other legal options that might help you?

If you obtain a restraining order, are you aware of the following steps to help provide for your safety?

- _____ Change locks on doors
- _____ Make sure windows have locks and are secure
- _____ Re-code garage door openers and home security systems
- _____ Have good outside lighting around the home
- _____ Consider keeping a dog as a pet
- _____ Vary your routine
- _____ Establish a code word/phrase with others that would indicate a need for help
- _____ Notify neighbors of your situation and ask them to watch for suspicious activity
- _____ Ask family and friends to give you a periodic call to check on safety
- _____ Keep emergency phone numbers with you
- _____ Keep phone numbers of family, friends, employers, babysitters, etc. with you
- _____ Keep copies of restraining order with you at all times - in your car, at work, etc.
- _____ Give copies of restraining order to your work, schools, sitters, relatives, friends, neighbors, etc.
- _____ Write down the date and time and general information of anything that may seem strange
- _____ Call the police if the restraining order is violated
- _____ Be vigilant and aware of your surroundings at all times
- _____ Ask someone to walk you to your car rather than walking alone

CRISIS LINE 303-688-8484 www.twcfoc.org



Do you have a Safety Plan? (cont'd)

It takes courage to leave an abuser. Leaving can be just as dangerous as staying - even more so. Seventy percent of victims killed by their abusers are killed while trying to leave. Safety is always the primary consideration. It takes time to develop and carry out an effective safety plan that can protect a victim and the children.

ITEMS YOU WILL NEED:

_____ Money - always keep some hidden.

_____ Keys - have two extra sets made, put one in a safe place, and give the other to a trusted friend.

_____ Extra Clothing - keep a bag ready for you and your children; this may have to be changed for the season.

_____ Important documents - social security numbers (yours and children's), birth certificates (yours and children's), pay stubs (yours and partner's), bank account information, insurance policies, marriage license, drivers license (yours and copy of partner's), any papers reflecting joint or mutual ownership, and copies of monthly bills, valuables, mementos or photographs that are important to you that your partner might destroy.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS:

Douglas County Sheriff.....	303-660-7500
Elbert County Sheriff.....	303-621-2027
Police: Castle Rock.....	303-688-3121
Elizabeth.....	303-646-3632
Parker.....	303-841-3133
WCFOC: 24 Hour Crisis Line.....	303-688-8484
Therapy for adults and children.....	303-688-1094
Legal Advocacy and Assistance.....	303-956-9975
Douglas County Victims Assistance.....	303-660-7535
Douglas County Social Service.....	303-688-4825
Douglas County Probation.....	303-688-9370
Gateway Shelter (Arapahoe County).....	303-343-1851
Gateway South (Englewood).....	303-761-7721
Denver Safehouse.....	303-830-6800
Women in Crisis (Jefferson County).....	303-420-6752
Boulder Safehouse.....	303-449-8623
Brandon Center & Theodora House (Denver City).....	303-620-9190
TESSA (Colorado Springs).....	719-633-3519
Alternatives to Family Violence (Commerce City).....	303-289-4441
Colorado Anti-Violence Program (GLBT).....	303-852-5094

Statistics...

Startling Statistics

- One in every four women will experience domestic violence in her lifetime.
- An estimated 1.3 million women are victims of physical assault by an intimate partner each year.
- 85% of domestic violence victims are women; 15% are men.
- Almost one-third of female homicide victims that are reported in police records are killed by an intimate partner.
- Domestic violence is one of the most chronically underreported crimes. Approximately one-quarter of all physical assaults, one-fifth of all rapes, and one-half of all stalkings perpetuated against females by intimate partners are reported to the police.
- The cost of intimate partner violence exceeds \$5.8 billion each year, \$4.1 billion of which is for direct medical and mental health services.

Why it matters?

Domestic violence is the willful intimidation, physical assault, battery, sexual assault, and/or other abusive behavior perpetrated by an intimate partner against another. It is an epidemic affecting individuals in every community, regardless of age, economic status, race, religion, nationality or educational background. Violence is often accompanied by emotionally abusive and controlling behavior, and thus is part of a systematic pattern of dominance and control. Domestic violence results in physical injury, psychological trauma, and sometimes death. The consequences of domestic violence can cross generations and truly last a life time.

(From the National Coalition of Domestic Violence)

“It takes more courage to reveal insecurities than to hide them, more strength to relate to people than to dominate them, more ‘manhood’ to abide by thought-out principles rather than blind reflex. Toughness is in the soul and spirit, not in muscles and an immature mind.” Anonymous



Safety Planning Tips

The Women's Crisis & Family Outreach Center (WCFOC) wants you to know that you are not alone. We are here to offer support, information, advocacy and intervention to women, men and children attempting to break free from the cycle of domestic violence. When you are ready, we are here. Technology can be very helpful to victims of domestic violence, sexual violence, and stalking; however, it is important to also consider how technology might be misused.

1. Trust your instincts. If you suspect the abusive person knows too much, it is possible that your phone, computer, email, or other activities are being monitored. Abusers and stalkers can act in incredibly persistent and creative ways to maintain power and control.

2. Plan for safety. Navigating violence, abuse, and stalking is very difficult and dangerous. Advocates at the National Domestic Violence Hotline have been trained on technology issues, and can discuss options and help you in your safety planning. Local hotline advocates, such as the WCFOC, can also help you plan for safety. (National DV Hotline: 1-800-799-7233 or the WCFOC Crisis line: 303-688-8484).

3. Take precautions if you have a "techy" abuser. If computers and technology are a profession or a hobby for the abuser/stalker, trust your instincts. If you think he/she may be monitoring or tracking you, talk to a hotline advocate or the police.

4. Use a safer computer. If anyone abusive has access to your computer, he/she might be monitoring your computer activities. Try to use a safer computer when you look for help, a new place to live, etc. It may be safest to use a computer at a public library, community center, or Internet café.

5. Create a new email account. If you suspect that anyone abusive can access your email, consider creating an additional email account on a safer computer. Do not create or check this new email from a computer your abuser could access, in case it is monitored. Use an anonymous name, and account. Example: bluecat@email.com, not YourRealName@email.com. Look for free web-based email accounts, and do not provide detailed information about yourself.

6. Check your cell phone settings. If you are using a cell phone provided by the abusive person, consider turning it off when not in use. Also, many phones let you "lock" the keys so a phone won't automatically answer or call if it is bumped. When on, check the phone settings; if your phone has an optional location service, you may want to switch the location feature off/on via phone settings or by turning your phone on and off.

Safety Planning Tips (cont'd)

- 7. Change passwords & pin numbers.** Some abusers use victim's email and other accounts to impersonate and cause harm. If anyone abusive knows or could guess your passwords, change them quickly and frequently. Think about any password protected accounts - online banking, voicemail, etc.
- 8. Minimize use of cordless phones or baby monitors.** If you don't want others to overhear your conversations, turn baby monitors off when not in use and use a traditional corded phone for sensitive conversations.
- 9. Use a donated or new cell phone .** When making or receiving private calls or arranging escape plans, try not to use a shared or family cell phone because cell phone billing records and phone logs might reveal your plans to an abuser. Contact your local hotline program to learn about donation programs that provide new cell phones and/or prepaid phone cards to victims of abuse and stalking.
- 10. Ask about your records and data.** Many court systems and government agencies are publishing records to the Internet. Ask agencies how they protect or publish your records and request that court, government, post office and others seal or restrict access to your files to protect your safety.
- 11. Get a private mailbox and don't give out your real address.** When asked by businesses, doctors, and others for your address, have a private mailbox address or a safer address to give them. Try to keep your true residential address out of national databases.
- 12. Search for your name on the Internet.** Major search engines such as "Google" or "Yahoo" may have links to your contact information. Search for your name in quotation marks: "Full Name". Check phone directory pages because unlisted numbers might be listed if you have given the number to anyone.

**For more safety information, call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at
1-800-799-SAFE (7233)
or the WCFOC at 303-688-8484**

"Anyone can give up, it's the easiest thing in the world to do. But to hold it together when everyone else would understand if you fell apart, that's true strength." Anonymous

What about the children?

Children living with abuse also suffer, even if they are not physically abused themselves. Long-term effects include behavioral problems (with peers, at home and at school), aggressive tendencies, psychosomatic illness, depression, and even suicide. An abuser will often threaten to kill the victim in front of the children or threaten to harm the children if the victim tries to leave. The family is manipulated in such a way that children feel out of control. They often become fearful and suspicious of outsiders because they may judge them or even worse know their secrets. A victim of domestic violence is often manipulated into believing that they and the children are safer staying in the relationship than leaving. Another obstacle to leaving is severe depression that often accompanies abuse. The withdrawal and loss of self-esteem associated with depression further isolates the victim and children. Victims of domestic violence question themselves for staying in the relationship, blame themselves for the situation and are filled with guilt and shame. The abuser is often charming in public, and may characterize his partner as incompetent. While abusers can be charming, they can also be erratic and unpredictable. The abuser's family walks on eggshells and lives in a hyper-vigilant state, waiting for the next violent occurrence.

As a parent, you are responsible to teach your children, socialize them and prepare them to be able to live in the world successfully without you.

Children from abusive homes usually perpetuate the cycle of violence by either abusing or being abused. This is because children learn through mimicking the behavior modeled by their parents and other significant adults. Children are dependent and vulnerable which makes them easy targets for manipulation and control. They often feel enormous guilt and shame, as if somehow it is their fault that the violence occurs. Whether or not children are physically abused, emotionally manipulated, or witnesses to domestic violence, they are damaged and they are victims. Children cannot thrive in an abusive home. Even after they are out of the violent situation it will take time and effort to help their wounds heal.

**If you believe that you or your children are in immediate danger call 911.
If you need someone to talk to, call the WCFOC Crisis Line at 303-688-8484.
An advocate will be there to listen and advise 24 hours a day.**

Victims of domestic violence are "beaten down" long before they are beaten up. ~
June Sheehan Belinger

What about the children... and teens?

Teen Dating Statistics

- 72% of 8th and 9th graders reportedly “date”.
- 1 in 4 adolescents report verbal, physical, emotional, or sexual abuse from a dating partner each year.
- Witnessing violence between one’s parents or caretakers is the strongest risk factor of transmitting violent behavior from one generation to the next.
- Boys who witness domestic violence are twice as likely to abuse their own partners and children when they become adults.
- About 10% of students nationwide reported being physically hurt by a boyfriend or girlfriend in the past 12 months.

Why it matters?

Dating violence can have a negative effect on health throughout life. Teens who are victims are more likely to be depressed and do poorly in school. They may engage in unhealthy behaviors, like using drugs and alcohol, and are more likely to have eating disorders. Some teens even think about or attempt suicide. Teens who are victims in high school are at higher risk for victimization during college.

(From the Center for Disease Control and Prevention)



Rural Victims of Domestic Violence

Victims of domestic violence in rural areas have many of the same experiences as domestic violence victims everywhere. But rural victims of domestic violence face certain barriers that are unique to rural settings. Batterers commonly isolate their victims as one tactic of maintaining power and control. Sometimes, the community the victim and batterer live in may support or enable the abuse through attitudes that it is a family matter that should stay within the family.

A victim in a rural community may be more isolated due to geography and limited resources, making it difficult to leave a violent partner. Other rural factors may have an impact on a rural domestic violence victim's isolation and chances of safe shelter. For example:

- a rural victim of domestic violence may not have phone service;
- usually no public transportation exists, so if they leave they must use a family vehicle;
- police and medical response to a call may be a long time in arriving;
- rural areas have fewer resources available—jobs, childcare, housing, and health care -- easy access to these resources is limited by distance;
- extreme weather conditions often exaggerate isolation—cold, snow, and mud regularly affect life in rural areas and may extend periods of isolation with an abuser;
- poor roads thwart transportation;
- seasonal work may mean months of unemployment on a regular basis and result in victims being trapped with an abuser for long periods of time;
- hunting weapons are common to rural homes and everyday tools like axes, chains, mauls, and pitchforks are also potential weapons;
- alcohol (and drug) use, which often increases in winter months when rural people are under-employed and isolated in their homes, usually affects the frequency and severity of abuse;
- traveling to the “big city” can be intimidating to rural domestic violence victims and city attitudes may seem strange and not accepting;
- a victim's bruises may fade or heal before they see a neighbor, and working with farm tools and equipment can provide an easy explanation of their injuries;
- farm families are often one-income families and domestic violence victims frequently have no money of their own to support themselves and their children;
- a family's finances are often tied up in land or equipment, so victims thinking of ending their relationship may face the agonizing reality that they and their partner may lose the family farm or their partner will be left with no means of income;
- court orders restraining abusers from having contact with victims are less viable for rural victims because their partners cannot be kept away from the farm if it is their only source of income;

Rural Victims of DV (cont'd)

- rural domestic violence victims frequently have strong emotional ties to the land and to farm animals and if they have an attachment to their animals, they may fear that their animals will be neglected or harmed if they leave; and
- rural victims of domestic violence are usually an important part of a family farm business, so if they leave, the business may fail.

“Knowing others is intelligence; knowing yourself is true wisdom. Mastering others is strength; mastering yourself is true power.” Anonymous

Rural victims of domestic violence have unique problems, but alternatives to living without abuse do exist. A domestic violence victim’s program can provide personal support, safety planning for you and your children, information about options available to you, transportation, legal information, safe shelter, and referrals to financial assistance, job training, and education options.



WCFOC info

Vision

It is the ultimate vision of the Women's Crisis & Family Outreach Center (WCFOC) to assist in ending violence in the lives of all people.

Mission

The WCFOC is dedicated to reducing domestic violence and family conflict through advocacy, empowerment, violence prevention and intervention, services and education.

Values

The WCFOC values the individual diversity of all employees, volunteers, clients, and supporters of our violence prevention programs. Differences and distinguishing factors provide experiences, viewpoints, and ideas that can strengthen and enrich our work. Our goal is to create an evolving environment that is inclusive, respectful, and equitable, and to welcome and be accessible to all populations of clients in order to accomplish the mission of the WCFOC.

About Us

The WCFOC is concerned about families affected by violence. Since its inception, this agency has provided programs and services to any domestic violence victim requesting those services and to the region at-large. These include our residential and non-residential programs as well as community presentations, trainings, and educational offerings; these are provided on a non-discriminatory basis regardless of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation. We serve persons from all ethnic, cultural and economic groups, of all ages and lifestyles.

The WCFOC opposes the use of violence as a means of control over others and supports equality in relationships. We strive to assist victims of domestic violence in assuming power over their lives and choosing options which afford them and their family a life free from violence. We recognize that violence affects the entire family, with each member requiring support and education in order to stop the cycle of violence.

WCFOC info (cont'd)

Our Establishment & History

In April 1985, a group of women concerned about victims in Douglas County, the effect on the children of these families, and the lack of available services to assist these victims, formed the Douglas County Task Force on Battered Women. These task force members began educating the community about domestic violence issues, disseminating information, and gathering support. In June 1985, they incorporated, forming the Women's Crisis Center of Douglas County. They then began seeking financial support in the community through individual and group solicitations, holding a major fund raising dinner at Cherokee Ranch, and applying for grants.

Through funds raised locally and a grant received from the 18th Judicial District Victim Assistance and Law Enforcement fund, the agency established a 24-hour crisis line. Over time, the agency added a shelter program, therapy and legal advocacy, and a school-based violence prevention initiative for at-risk children.

In 2005, its 20th anniversary year, the Women's Crisis Center changed its name to the Women's Crisis & Family Outreach Center (WCFOC) to more definitively position its role in domestic violence prevention while building on its 20-plus year history in domestic violence intervention.

2010 marked the 25th anniversary for the Women's Crisis & Family Outreach Center. We now celebrate more than 25 years of giving victims a voice & families a future. WCFOC believes every human has the right to live a life free from violence and continues to work towards this vision.

Today, the WCFOC has a staff of over 30 and a volunteer base exceeding 200 individuals to carry out our mission. Now, from four locations in Douglas and Elbert counties, we provide positive prevention and intervention, safety and hope, education and awareness to approximately 20,000 individuals each year.



Celebrating more than 25 years of
Giving Victims a Voice & Families a Future
Women's Crisis & Family Outreach Center