

TRIBAL PROGRAM NEWS

Recognizing Domestic Violence

This information is adapted, with permission from the author, from "Domestic Violence" by Karl Hempel, M.D. The article was originally published in the Health Gazette, and can be viewed in its entirety at <http://www.freenet.thl.fl.us/HealthGazette/domestic.html>.

Definition

Domestic violence is a pattern of controlling behaviors aimed at gaining power in order to control an intimate partner. Domestic violence is about power and control. It is not just about hitting or punching. It is a pattern of assaultive and coercive behavior, including psychological, sexual and physical abuse. The syndrome of dominance and control by the perpetrator leading to increasing entrapment of the victim is also known as the "battering syndrome." The majority of the time, it is a female who is abused.

Types of Abuse

Abuse does not just mean physical abuse. It takes several different forms, described briefly below:

1. Emotional abuse can be in the form of repeated verbal attacks. It can be coercing her into doing things that she may find humiliating or against her moral or religious principles.
2. Isolation is a type of abuse. The batterer finds fault with social contacts of the victim, including family members. The victim ends up with nobody to confide in.
3. The batterer may threaten to take or harm the children if the victim doesn't do what he wants her to do.
4. Gender-role stereotypes play a dominant role in battering relationships. Perceived "male privileges" may enter into abusive relationships. An example would be the batterer's perception that he has a right to force his partner into having sex because it is her "duty" to consent to sex at any time. This perception disregards a woman's right to have her own feelings and make decisions for herself without feeling guilty.
5. Economic abuse is frequently involved in an abusive relationship. Victims of domestic violence may have no independent access to money even if they are working. Their abusive spouse may harass them so much that they turn over their paychecks to avoid further abuse. A lack of money is frequently responsible for keeping women in abusive relationships. They feel that there is no escape.

Natural Resources Ordinances Project Update

by Ceola Norton, Project Coordinator

The Tribe's Natural Resources Ordinances Project is six months old! Here's an update on what we've been doing.

We have drafted three of the five ordinances scheduled to be completed this first year. The Tribal Administration Procedures Ordinances and the Civil Offenses Ordinance have gone through the first draft stage, are currently being amended, and are scheduled to be reviewed by Tribal Council on July 2, 1999.

The Tribal Forest Management Ordinance received an initial screening by the Natural Resources staff, and then we circulated a draft for public comment. Cat, Diane and I have enjoyed visiting the area offices to present the draft to staff and hold community meetings. We accepted comments on the draft up until June 4, 1999.

Currently, Diane is researching forest practices and water quality issues. We will write the Tribe's Forest Practices Regulations with the help of Assistant Tribal Forester Mari Kramer. In the meantime, Cat will use the public comments to amend the Forest Management Ordinance.

Over the next six months, we will finish up the Forest Management Ordinance and Forest Practices Regulations, and research and draft a Water Quality Ordinance and a Sacred Sites Ordinance. We also will apply for second- and third-year funds for this ANA grant. This will enable the project to prepare seven more ordinances that the Tribe will use to steward its natural resources.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the ordinances, regulations, or the Natural Resources Ordinances Project, please contact me at 1-800-922-1399, ext. 292.

6. Sexual abuse includes rape as well as forcing the woman to perform sexual acts that make her uncomfortable or that she feels are immoral. This is a way the perpetrator can control her body.

Why Doesn't She Just Leave?

One very important reason women don't leave an abusive relationship is the fear that they will be harmed if they try to leave. This fear is well-grounded: Statistics show that the most dangerous time for a domestic violence victim is when she is leaving or the batterer believes she is leaving. According to Bureau of Justice statistics, divorced or separated men commit 79 percent of spouse abuse. This is why it is critical for a victim to develop a safety plan when preparing to leave her batterer.

There are many other reasons that a victim feels unable to leave. She may not have the financial means to support herself and her children. She may feel that the children need an intact family, and her religious or cultural beliefs may dictate that the family should remain intact at any cost. She may also believe that the violence is her fault. She may love the perpetrator and believe him when he promises it will never happen again.

No one deserves to be abused for any reason. Help is available.

If you are in immediate danger, call 911 and tell them who you are, who is hurting you, and the address of your current location.

Women's shelter/ crisis lines can help by providing emotional support and emergency shelter. They also have information about your legal rights and options.

Central Area Office: Women's Violence Intervention Program

24-hour crisis helplines 541-574-9211
541-994-5959
1-800-841-8325
Newport advocacy office 541-574-9424

Portland Area Office: Bradley Angle House
24-hour crisis helpline 503-281-2442
Native Women's Support Group 503-232-7805

Salem Area Office: Women's Crisis Services
24-hour crisis helpline 503-399-7722

Eugene Area Office:
Womenspace crisis line:
Eugene 541-485-6513
1-800-281-2800
Junction City 541-998-3799
Oakridge 541-782-2887
Siuslaw 541-997-4444