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www.NLAIDVProject.us

Welcome Our New Chair!

On behalf of the NLA-I Domestic Violence Project, I would like to welcome you to our first newsletter in six years! We would also like to introduce to you, our new Chair for the Project, Ms. Pat Machate LCSW-C, LCADC.

Pat is a Licensed Certified Social Worker- Clinical and Licensed Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor in the state of Maryland where she has worked as a clinical therapist with families and children for the past 15 years. She began her work with intimate partner violence in Howard County, Maryland where she was the Children's Program Coordinator for the previously named Domestic Violence Center of Howard County. During that time, she acted as a consultant on Domestic Violence for the Child Advocacy Center. Previously she was a Crisis Hotline and hospital Victim Accompaniment volunteer at the then called Sexual Trauma, Abuse, Rape & Recovery Center. In her clinical career, she has specialized in populations including gay and trans youth, special education, juvenile justice, disabilities, and addictions.

Pat has been active in the BDSM and Leather Community for over two decades spanning the DC Metro area to Hawaii. She can often be found supporting her local leather play spaces, the Baltimore Playhouse and Studio 58.

She currently has a virtual private practice called Lifestyle Aware Counseling www.lifestyleawarecounseling.com where she specializes in therapy and coaching members of alternative communities including polyamory, BDSM, and LGBTQ. She can also be found on the NCSF's Kink Aware Directory.

Update from the Chair

In the few months that I have been serving, with the support of NLA-I's President, CandiAnne Shafer, the Domestic Violence Project has made exceptional progress in getting back on track to providing the Leather/BDSM/Fetish communities with education to aid in the reduction of domestic violence. Projects that have been completed include:

- Updating and reformatting the DVP website to become more user friendly. It can be viewed at: <http://nlaidvproject.us>
- 13 pamphlets developed to provide the public with quick references to facts regarding BDSM and domestic violence were added to the website <http://nlaidvproject.us/dvp/pamphlet/>

- A winner was selected for the design of our DVP pins. Thank you Daddy BEAR from TH for the design. They can be purchased for \$5 which includes shipping. We are expecting them to arrive any day. They can be purchased here: <http://nlaidvproject.us/dvp/ways-to-give/pins/>
- Current federal legislation has been added to the website so that members can stay up to date on domestic violence issues. They can be viewed here: <http://nlaidvproject.us/dvp/news-and-events/legislation/>
- New postcards were ordered which can also be ordered from the website for free. These are great to have in play spaces, available at events, and community expos. Please let us know if you need any. They can be ordered here: <http://nlaidvproject.us/dvp/159-2/>

But there's still so much work to be done. For example:

- Several of our chapters do not have DVP committee members. Talk to your chapter president if you would like to take on that responsibility.
- We are looking for a newsletter editor.
- The Service Directory is grossly out of date. We need help updating it so that we have the most recent information for people needing services.
- Fundraising, fundraising, fundraising! Willing to hold events, raffles, or other creative way to help us fund our programs so that he can keep providing our services for FREE? Let us know.
- Keep us updated on domestic violence event and news in your area.

Pat Machate, NLA-I DVP Chair

Know the Difference

Now that we are back on track, let's do a simple review of Abuse vs. Healthy BDSM. First let's talk about abuse.

What is abuse? Random House Webster's Dictionary defines abuse as "to use wrongly or improperly" and "to treat in a harmful, injurious or offensive way." Domestic violence is abuse between family members or related persons. It also occurs in any relationship between two or more intimates. Non-consensual dominance and control, also known as "domestic violence" may come in many forms: actual physical abuse, threats of physical abuse, emotional abuse, threatening telephone calls, disturbances at a place of employment, and stalking. Domestic violence is distinguished from other kinds of abuse because of the special relationship between the persons.

Domestic violence is further defined as the chronic, physical, sexual and psychological maltreatment of one intimate partner by another, with the intent to control in non-consensual or harmful ways. This misuse of power harms the psychological, social, economic, sexual and physical well-being of the victim.

What is healthy BDSM? Healthy BDSM is when two or more adults consent to exchange energy, power, sensations or experiences (however extreme) in ways that fuel their mutual happiness and personal interpretation of well-being. It can also be when two or more people agree to forego a “formal” or verbal consenting process (often called consensual non-consent). Only you can know when you agree to something.

Many partners use “safe words” as a way to distinguish their level of agreement but a number of other healthy BDSM practitioners do not. The use of safe words is not the only way to distinguish consent. If you are being fulfilled and have increased self-esteem as a result of your activities and your partner claims the same, then chances are you have a very healthy BDSM relationship. Only you can know. A healthy BDSM relationship is one where both parties are actively invested in the well-being of each other and themselves.

What does abusive BDSM look like? If you have lingering feelings that “this isn’t right” or that “something is wrong with this picture” then there is cause for further consideration. It may not be abuse, but it is important to listen to your internal alarms and explore areas of concern. An unhealthy BDSM relationship will have one (or more) partners acting in ways that create harm to another, be it physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, sexual, social or economic. In an abusive relationship you may notice the following:

- abuser decides to violate agreements and/or negotiations or has dominant/submissive behaviors outside of agreed or pre-negotiated spaces
- threats of abandonment or loss of current contract if new demands are not met
- forcing partner to do things alone, together or with others in ways that violate or compromise previous negotiations
- forcing, coercing, manipulating, bribing or seducing partner to have sex with anyone
- name calling, mind games, denial of human necessities (food, water, shelter as needed, healthcare, etc.), especially in ways that reduce self-esteem
- threats to expose lifestyle to co-workers, vanilla family members or children
- giving someone drugs, alcohol or other substances to elicit or affect their consent

If you think you may be in an abusive BDSM relationship: You may feel that no one will understand what you are going through. You may feel alone. Look up a BDSM sensitive therapist on-line through the [KINK-Aware Professionals list \(https://www.ncsfreedom.org/resources/kink-aware-professionals-directory/kap-directory-homepage.html\)](https://www.ncsfreedom.org/resources/kink-aware-professionals-directory/kap-directory-homepage.html) and get help. You do not deserve to be abused and you cannot prevent it with more control or better service. Abuse and Domestic Violence can occur even in well-negotiated relationships to bottoms and tops alike and it is not okay. Get help.

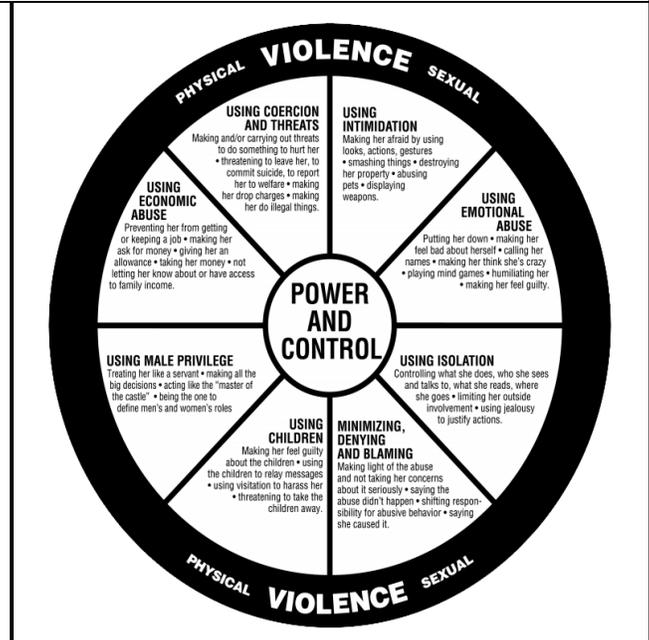
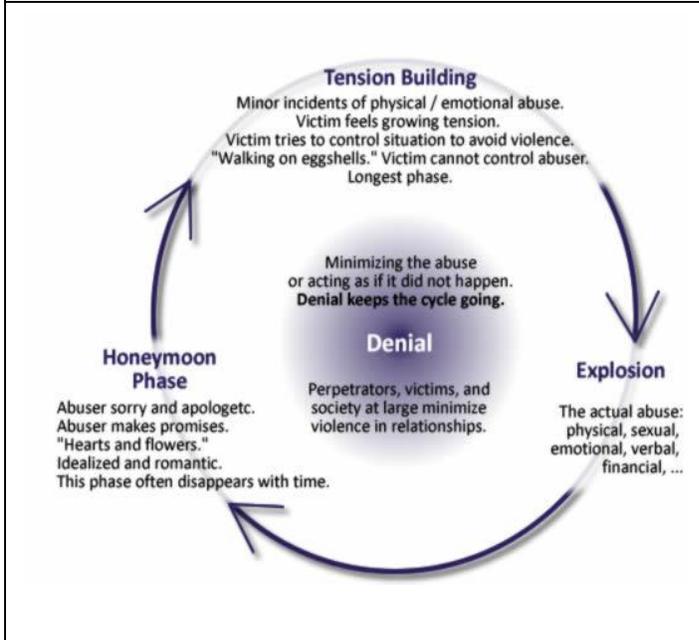
Trust your instincts. Make a plan. Get help so you can get out.

If you are the victim of abuse or domestic violence, get help now or make a plan to get out.

<http://nlaidvproject.us/dvp/pamphlet/pamphlet-1-abuse-vs-healthy-bdsm>

Cycle of Violence

Power & Control Wheel



These are two basic tools when educating people about violence. The first, the **Cycle of Violence**, was first presented by Lenore Walker in her landmark book, *The Battered Woman*, to describe some women's experience of physical abuse in their relationships. Since then, the cycle has been widely used by domestic violence advocates and proved useful to many victims of domestic violence to explain their experience of abuse.

Please be aware that the above wheel doesn't necessarily cover all violent relationships. There are some things to keep in mind:

1. the cycle may be at the early stages of a relationship and may not be ongoing/chronic
2. note that the cycle doesn't only involve physical abuse, there is also mental, emotional, financial, sexual and verbal.
3. what constitutes abuse is different to different people – someone who had an abusive childhood may not be able to be screamed at during an argument because it causes them to shut down, if their partner knows this about their history and uses it against them that too can be considered abusive.

Professionals need to remember that they have no idea how many times the victim went through the cycle before leaving.

Victims need to know that the longer they stay the more lethal and frequent the cycle will become.

Tension Phase – this is a phase where minor incidents happen such as arguments, verbal abuse, mild physical abuse (pushing, shoving), harsh words, etc. The victim is “walking on eggshells” and tries to avoid the abuser or may attempt to calm them whenever possible. The victim believes staying out of the way will keep it from happening, that the abuser will get back to “normal” soon and nothing will happen. As this phase escalates the victim’s coping mechanisms lessen as do the ability to stay out of the way, keep quiet, deal with the situation in general.

Explosion – the tension reaches the breaking point and the violence occurs. There is so much anger within the abuser that they lash out with no holding back whether it’s verbal or physical. They may even try to rationalize that the victim had it coming and list their grievances from the tension phase. Often the attack is followed by shock and denial on the part of both the victim and the abuser, both may attempt to rationalize it and the victim will attempt to minimize the marks left from physical abuse.

Happy (Honeymoon) Times – are when the abuser is extremely loving, kind, hearts, candy and flowers sweet, full of apology. They ask for forgiveness and swear it’ll never happen again. They may even promise to stop doing a certain behavior (drinking, drugs, gambling, working too much etc.). that led to the tension phase. The bad part about this phase is it brings about false hope, the victim sees a piece of the partner they had (or thought they had) and still want. The victim wants so much to believe the apology and the promises that they wither because they feel that the abuser is being honest and they see desperation and fear of loneliness and alienation which they don’t want to be responsible for.

Those who get to the happy phase will often stop seeing counselors and support groups, cease divorce proceedings and drop charges. They believe the situation has been repaired.

Then the tension builds and the cycle repeats.

[Cycle of Violence]. Retrieved February 8, 2016 from <http://www.dvsolutions.org/info/cycle.aspx>

The second image is of the **Power and Control Wheel**. The Power and Control Wheel was developed from the experience of battered women in Duluth who had been abused by their male partners. While they have developed other wheels (i.e. culture, LGBT, equality), this is the one most commonly used and can be applied to IPV of both genders. This is an excellent educational image and can often be used for training purposes as well as helping victims to understand how a batterer

systematically uses threats, intimidation, and coercion to instill fear in his partner. These behaviors are the spokes of the wheel.

[Power & Control Wheel]. Retrieved February 8, 2016 from <http://www.theduluthmodel.org/training/wheels.html>



The Center for Disease Control & Prevention reports:

1. Dating violence has important negative effects on the mental and physical health of youth, as well as on their school performance.
2. Violence in an adolescent relationship sets the stage for problems in future relationships, including intimate partner violence and sexual violence perpetration and/or victimization throughout life. Therefore, early intervention is needed to stop violence in youth relationships before it begins and keep it from continuing into adult relationships.
3. Although evidence suggests dating violence is a significant problem in economically disadvantaged urban communities, where often times due to environmental factors an accumulation of risk factors for violence exists, there have been few attempts to adapt the developing evidence base for prevention of dating violence within these communities.
4. Among adult victims of rape, physical violence, and/ or stalking by an intimate partner, 22% of women and 15% of men first experienced some form of partner violence between 11 and 17 years of age.
5. Dating violence can have a negative effect on health throughout life. Youth who are victims are more likely to experience symptoms of depression and anxiety, engage in unhealthy behaviors, like using tobacco, drugs, and alcohol, or exhibit antisocial behaviors and think about suicide.^{3,4,5} Youth who are victims of dating violence in high school are at higher risk for victimization during college.
6. Approximately 9% of high school students report being hit, slapped, or physically hurt on purpose by a boyfriend or girlfriend in the 12 months before surveyed.



Love Doesn't Have To Hurt
TEENS

A PARENT'S GUIDE TO TEEN DATING VIOLENCE- 10 QUESTIONS TO START THE CONVERSATION

QUESTION 1: HOW ARE THINGS GOING? Make your first question a general one, rather than one related specifically to dating violence — otherwise, you might put your teen on the spot.

Says Rosalind Wiseman, “Keep an eye on the goal of the conversation. For example, you might hear, ‘Why do you care all of a sudden?’ Remember, underneath the provocative tone, your child is telling you something. Beyond the problems he or she may be having with friends, your child wants you around more. Before you go any further, it is critical to acknowledge these feelings. Ask your teen ‘Why would you say something like that? I really want to know.’ Then listen.”

QUESTION 2: WHAT ARE YOUR FRIENDS' DATING RELATIONSHIPS LIKE? What's the difference between “going together” and “being committed?” How long do your teen's peers stay together? Do they make any kind of commitment to each other? Are there certain things boys want that girls don't? Are there things girls want in these relationships that boys don't want? Your teen may have very set notions about the roles of males and females. A boy may have the mistaken impression that guys are always in control while girls are supposed to follow along. You may be happy to hear your teen thinks mutual respect is a key part of any relationship. You will only find out by asking questions.

QUESTION 3: HAVE YOU SEEN ANY KIND OF ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR BETWEEN TWO PEOPLE WHO ARE GOING OUT? Here's your chance to define “abusive behaviors” or “violence” and compare your definition to your teenager's.

Also, look at the warning signs on the following page from the perspective of a potential abuser. Don't look the other way if you see red flags in your teen. Reach out to help now, when he or she needs your support and guidance most.

QUESTION 4: WHY DO YOU THINK ONE PERSON WOULD ABUSE THE OTHER WHEN DATING? Society repeatedly tells boys that in order to be a man, they must be powerful, strong and in control. In relationships, this control can occur as psychological or emotional abuse, threats, possessiveness and jealousy, intimidation and isolation, and actual violence. All too often, this behavior is excused.

This discussion may bring up some uncomfortable disagreements or questions about what you as a parent really believe. What examples is your teen learning in your house and in your interactions? Be honest and open about your thoughts, questions and answers.

QUESTION 5: WHY MIGHT A PERSON STAY IN AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP? There are many reasons why teens might stay in abusive relationships:

- In high school, status and self-esteem are often intricately linked to a teen's relationship.
- She may be in love and want the violence to end, but not the relationship.
- In an abusive relationship, a teen can feel like no one understands the abuser but her.
- She might fear that if you find out, you won't let the couple date any longer.
- She may not have healthy relationships to compare this to, and she may see abusive behavior modeled at home. She might think this is just what "being in love" is like.
- She might fear bringing shame to the family. She may worry that you will be disappointed in her.

QUESTION 6: WHAT MAKES A RELATIONSHIP HEALTHY? A healthy relationship is one in which the partners have a commitment to making the relationship work, and at the same time they respect each other's individuality and personal boundaries. A healthy relationship is also one in which you would not hurt the other person emotionally, physically or sexually.

WARNING SIGNS

Here are some signs to look for:

1. She apologizes for his behavior and makes excuses for him.
2. She loses interest in activities that she used to enjoy.
3. She stops seeing friends and family members and becomes more and more isolated.
4. When your daughter and her boyfriend are together, he calls her names and puts her down in front of other people.
5. He acts extremely jealous of others who pay attention to her, especially other guys.
6. He thinks or tells your daughter that you (her parents) don't like him.
7. He controls her behavior, checking up on her constantly, calling and texting her, demanding to know who she has been with.
8. She casually mentions his violent behavior, but laughs it off as a joke.
9. You see him violently lose his temper, striking or breaking objects.
10. She often has unexplained injuries, or the explanations she offers don't make sense.

QUESTION 7: WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU HAVE A FRIEND WHO IS THREATENED - OR A FRIEND WHO IS ABUSIVE? Here are some ways for your teen to respond if they have a friend with unexplained bruises or someone's boyfriend seems rough and uncaring:

TALKING TO TEENS WHO ARE ABUSED

Talking to a friend dealing with dating violence can make an enormous difference to her. She is probably feeling very isolated and alone.

When talking to this friend, there are several key things your teen should keep in mind:

Listen to what she has to say, and don't be judgmental. Let her know you are there for her whenever she needs to talk, and that you are worried about her. Let her know that you won't tell anyone she doesn't want you to about her situation — and then keep your word (unless you fear for her physical safety). Be specific about why you are concerned. Let her know about behavior you have seen and how it made you feel. Find someone knowledgeable about abuse that she can talk to and volunteer to go with her.

TALKING TO TEENS WHO ABUSE

Most guys who hurt their girlfriends are in denial about their actions and don't consider themselves "abusers." But reaching out and talking to a friend who is being violent in his relationship is truly an act of friendship, though it may seem like the hardest thing to do. When talking to a friend who is being abusive, here are some tips your teen can keep in mind: Be specific about what you saw and let your friend know you won't stand by and let the behavior continue. Make sure he realizes that his actions have consequences and he could get into serious trouble — from getting expelled from school to going to jail. Urge him to get help from a counselor, coach or any trusted adult, and offer to go with him if he wants support. Let him know that you care about him, and that you know he has it in him to change.

QUESTION 8: WHAT KIND OF MESSAGES ABOUT DATING ABUSE AND RELATIONSHIPS DO WE SEE IN THE MEDIA? This is where your values come in. Listen to your child's music and talk about the messages you hear. What posters hang on your teen's walls? Are they heroes whose values you agree with? If not, talk to your teen and find out why negative messages are resonating with him or her. Explain your views and listen to what your child has to say, it may tell you a lot about the pressures and social dynamics your teen is facing every day.

QUESTION 9: IF YOUR TEEN IS DATING SOMEONE, ASK "HOW IS YOUR RELATIONSHIP GOING?" If your teen is not dating someone, ask "When you think about going out with someone, what are some behaviors that would be okay and what are some that you would have a problem with?"

Be prepared for the possibility that there is indeed violence in your son's or daughter's relationship. How will you respond? You may feel guilty, blaming yourself for not seeing the problem sooner. Before doing anything else, stop, take a breath and remember this is really about your teen.

Start by letting your daughter know that you love her. Thank her for trusting you and tell her she can always talk to you about it. Ending any relationship takes time, and it can be even harder when abuse is involved. While it may feel frustrating and scary, it is not a good idea to forbid your daughter from seeing her boyfriend. This won't make her safe — it will just make her stop confiding in you about the problem. Ask her "What can we do to help you?" She might not have the answer, but she needs to feel in control. Find a counselor who specializes in teen dating violence and continue to support her by being loving, open and non-judgmental. Contact a domestic violence

agency, or call the National Dating Abuse Helpline (1-866-331-9474 or 1-866-331-8453 TTY) or visit www.loveisrespect.org for advice on how to handle your daughter's particular situation.

If your son confides in you that he has become violent in his relationship, you need to support him as well. Let him know that you love him, and that you don't think he is a terrible person. Nevertheless, be firm in letting him know that his behavior has to change. Offer to help him by locating community resources that can provide counseling. Look honestly at your own actions and the behaviors you have modeled in your home, and take responsibility if you have instilled in your son ideas that may have influenced his abusive behavior. Let him know that he can come and talk to you about this anytime without fear of punishment.

QUESTION 10: WHERE CAN YOU GO TO FIND HELP IF YOU OR YOUR FRIEND

NEEDS IT? Where does your teen look for help? It could be a relative, friend of the family, clergy member, teacher, school counselor, coach or even the police. A local domestic violence program or the National Dating Abuse Helpline (1-866-331-9474 or 1-866331-8453 TTY) or visit www.loveisrespect.org can tell you if there is a program or support group in your community.

AFTER THE QUESTIONS - AND ANSWERS

Remember, communication is an ongoing part of your relationship with your child. Revisit these questions over time, and keep checking in with your teenager. Knowing that you are there for them, to listen, talk to, support and accept them as they navigate the challenging waters of adolescence, can put them way ahead of the game in forming healthy, respectful, non-violent relationships.

We hope the questions in this handbook will serve as a guide to begin these important conversations. With a little time, energy, compassion and engaged listening, you can make the most of your role in the life of your son or daughter. **RESOURCES** If you or your teen knows someone who is in an abusive relationship and needs help, go online to loveisrespect.org or call the National Dating Abuse Helpline at 1-866-331-9474 or TTY 1-866-331-8454 for the hearing impaired.

CONTRIBUTORS

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All of the handbooks in our series can be downloaded on our website at www.loveisnotabuse.com

This pamphlet can be found at: http://www.breakthecycle.org/sites/default/files/hanbook_-_parents_of_teen_0.pdf

We are currently soliciting Individual and Corporate Sponsors to help fund our ongoing and new projects. Please talk to your local BDSM businesses, groups, play spaces, and authors to share our vision. For more information, visit <http://nlaidvproject.us/dvp/ways-to-give/sponsors/>