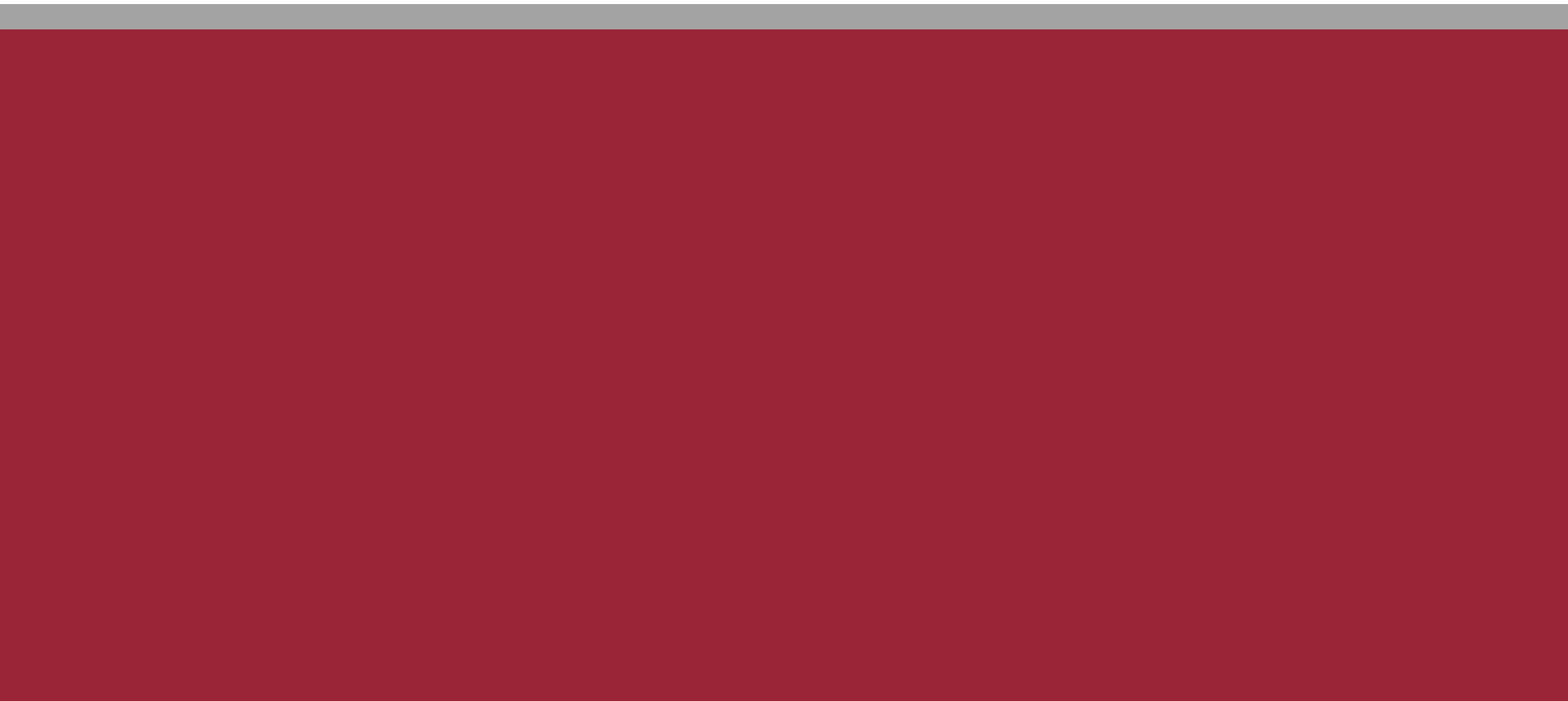




RAMSEY COUNTY

Working with you to enhance our quality of life



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE WAIVERS: A Supportive Collaboration to Better Serve Victims on MFIP

June 3, 2015

Abigail Sterner – Legal
Advocate/Training Coordinator

Hua Moua – Planning Specialist

Emily Johnson – Employment
Counselor and Domestic Violence
Specialist

Agenda

- Domestic Violence
 - Agencies Collaboration
 - Roles and Responsibilities
 - Pros and Cons of Collaboration
 - Family Waiver Plan
 - Communication and Support
 - Resources
-

What is Domestic Violence

Battering is the establishment of control and fear in a relationship through violence and other forms of abuse. The batterer uses acts of violence and a series of behaviors including intimidation, threats, psychological abuse, isolation, etc. to coerce and control the other person. The violence may not happen often, but it remains as a hidden (and constant) terrorizing fact. - *Uniform Crime Reports, Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1990*

Violence used by one partner or family member against another partner or family member, usually referring to adults.
Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women

Who are Victims?

- Domestic Violence does not discriminate
- 85 to 90% of Domestic Violence victims are female
- On average, 3 women are murdered by their current or former intimate partner in this country everyday.
- Approximately 1 in 5 female high school students reports being physically and/or sexually by a dating partner.

Women Are More Likely Than Men To Be Killed By Intimate Partners

Percent of total female and total male homicide victims killed by an intimate partner of the opposite sex, 2003-2012



Who Are the Victims

- *Domestic Violence is the leading cause of injury to women between the ages of 15-44 in the United States— more than car accidents, muggings and rapes combined.*
- *Every 9 seconds in the U.S. a woman is assaulted or beaten*

Uniform Crime Report

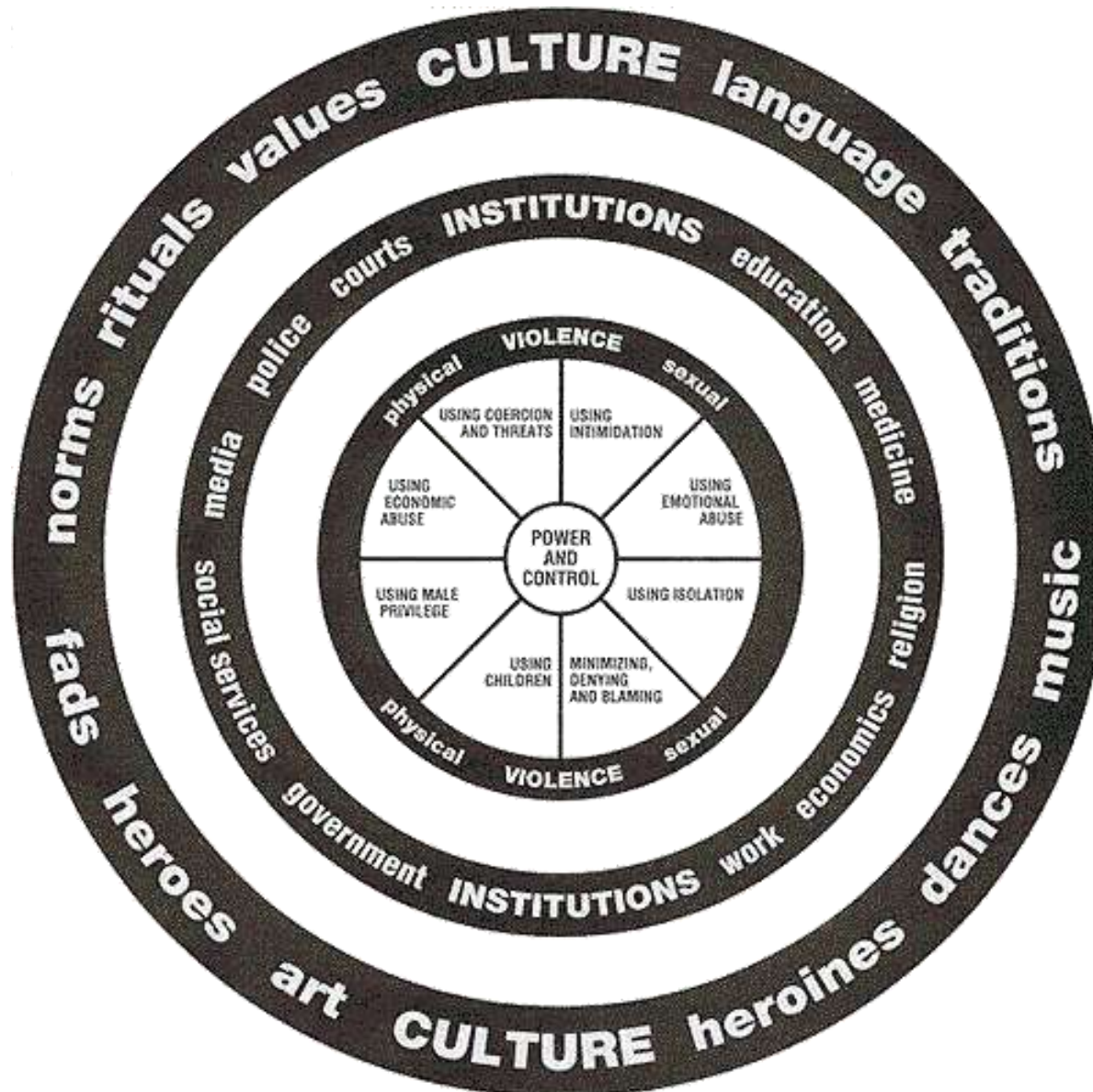
How do batterers maintain power and control over their partners?

Power: the ability to influence.

Control: the ability to shape and block influence







Regional Impact

- DV accounts for 26% of crimes in Minnesota
 - 1 in 3 women will be a victim of domestic violence
 - An estimated 65,000 primary and secondary victims (family members and friends) receive services from battered women's programs in Minnesota on a yearly basis.
 - SPIP serves 5,400 annually
-

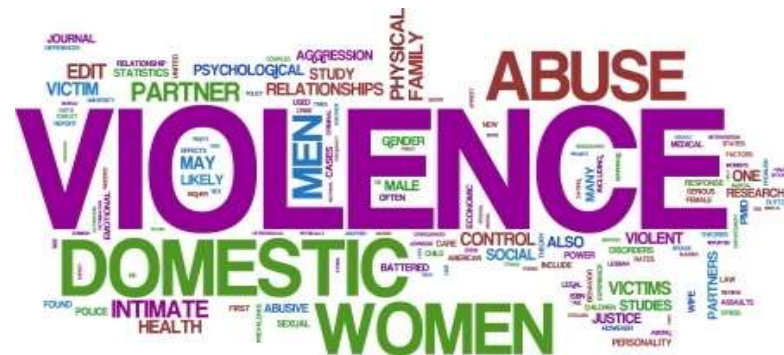
Regional Impact

- Over 80% of victims in Minnesota did not report the incident to law enforcement
- The St. Paul Police had more than 12,000 domestic violence related calls for service in 1 year
- During 6 months following DV incident, 32% are victimized again
- In Minnesota, more than 13,000 Orders for Protection are filed annually

2014 Femicide Report

Last year in Minnesota:

- 16 women were murdered in cases where the suspected, alleged, or convicted perpetrator was a current or former husband, boyfriend, or male intimate partner.
- 5 family members/friends were murdered in domestic violence-related situations.
- 2 men were murdered in a case where the suspected, alleged, or convicted perpetrator was a current or former intimate partner.
- 19 children were left motherless due to these murders.



Statistics

A 75% increased risk of physical harm and/or death when a victims decides to leave their abuser

According to a report presented to the Senate Judiciary Committee, 50% of all homeless women and children in this country are fleeing domestic violence.

Elizabeth Schneider, "Legal Reform Efforts for Battered Women: Past, Present and Future", prepared for the Ford Foundation

Collaboration

Ramsey County Workforce Solutions contract with St. Paul Ramsey Domestic Abuse Intervention Project to institute system wide trainings for new Domestic Violence Specialists



Partners

- Ramsey County Workforce Solutions
- St. Paul and Ramsey County Domestic Abuse Intervention Project
- Ramsey County MFIP ES Providers

AIFC – American Indian Family Center

EAC – Employment Action Center

GWES – Goodwill Easter Seals of MN

HAP – Hmong American Partnership

HIRED

Public Health

YWCA – YWORKS

Workforce Solutions – MFIP/DWP/EXTENSION

Role of St. Paul Ramsey County Domestic Abuse Intervention Project

- Provide ongoing support and resources to partner agencies
 - Provide ongoing DV trainings to partner agencies and/or domestic violence specialists
 - Conduct bi-monthly DVS meetings
 - Connect with Guest Speakers on various DV topics
 - Work with referring victims of domestic families
-

Collaboration

- Our collaboration utilizes Employment Counselors that are trained as Domestic Violence Specialists
 - Assist other counselors and participants to develop a DV waiver plan that is victim safety focused and contains safety provisions along with referrals to community resources for ongoing confidential advocacy and support.
-

Person Trained in DV

A “person trained in domestic violence” is a person who works for an organization designated by the Minnesota Center for Crime Victim Services as providing services to victims of domestic violence, a county staff person who has received similar specialized training or any other person or organization designated by a qualifying organization.



Person Trained in DV

A person trained in domestic violence could also be a county or Employment Services staff person who previously received training as an advocate while working at an organization designated by the Center for Crime Victim Services, or it could be someone from Legal Aid or another agency who has been designated by a qualifying organization. Each county must identify locally trained people in order to ensure access for all MFIP participants.

Domestic Violence Specialist Criteria

- Have compassion and sensitivity to the needs of others
 - Able to relate with people of diverse cultures and unique barriers they face in accessing services
 - Be understanding of the individual's situation
 - Be a good listener
 - Loves to collaborate and enjoys building partnership
 - Background with DV or criminal justice is helpful but not necessary
 - Preferably female DV specialists as 90% of the cases are women
-

To Become a DV Specialist

- ✓ Domestic Violence: An Overview
 - ✓ Domestic Violence and Its Impact on Women and children
 - ✓ Local Resources
 - ✓ Child Protection
 - ✓ Navigating the Legal System
 - ✓ Cultural Impact on DV Victims
 - ✓ Domestic Violence Memo/Policy
 - ✓ How to complete a Domestic Violence Waiver Plan
 - ✓ DV Case Scenarios/Activities
 - ✓ Video Clip and Discussion
-

Pros of Collaboration

- ✓ Tailor Training within TANF
- ✓ Easy access within agencies
- ✓ Sharing of Best Practices
- ✓ Case Consultations
- ✓ Understanding/Knowledge of MFIP



Cons of Collaboration

- ✓ Dual Role Hat as Employment Counselor and Domestic Violence Specialist
 - ✓ Smaller agencies – 1 DV specialist
 - ✓ In-house - participants less likely to seek intensive DV services
-

Roles and Responsibilities

DV Specialist	DV Advocate	Employment Counselor	Participant
<p>Trained in Domestic Violence</p> <p>Knowledge of MFIP</p> <p>Assess and assist the counselor and client to develop a safety plan</p> <p>Connect the counselor and/or participant to resources</p> <p>Provided ongoing resources and support to EC</p>	<p>Advocates are focused on one thing: helping battered women</p> <p>Specifically trained to navigate through systems such as law enforcement criminal/civil legal system, child protection, county agencies.</p> <p>Assess the appropriateness of the safety plan if a DV Specialist is not available.</p>	<p>Knowledge of MFIP</p> <p>Refer participants to resources/support</p> <p>Create plan with participant, along with DV Specialist/Advocate</p> <p>Monthly check-in with participant on EP Activities and safety plan</p> <p>Assess plan every 3 months</p>	<p>Assist with EC and DV to create plan that leads to engagement and employment</p> <p>Follow through with safety plan</p> <p>Discuss any changes in circumstances</p>

Family Violence Waiver



Family Violence Waiver

What is a DV Waiver?

- Flexible employment plan, developed with someone trained in DV and EC
- Stops the cash assistance clock
- Eligible for Family Stabilization Services, flexible activities
- Can't be required to "leave" the abuser
- Can exclude an abusive member from the household for benefits purposes
- Extension of cash assistance past 60 months

Acceptable Documentations

- police, government agency, or court records
- a statement from a battered women's shelter staff with knowledge of the circumstances
- a statement from a sexual assault or domestic violence advocate with knowledge of the circumstances
- a statement from professionals from whom the participant has sought assistance for the abuse.
- a sworn statement from the participant
- Or a sworn statement from any other person with knowledge of the circumstances or credible evidence that supports the client's statement.

Family Violence Waiver

Who Qualifies?

- Recipients of public benefits:
DWP, GA, SNAP, etc.
 - Specifically cash assistance
(Temporary Assistance for Needy
Families - TANF) - MFIP
-

Requesting a Family Violence Waiver

Family or Household members are:

- Spouses or former spouses
- Parents and children
- People related by blood
- People who are residing together or who have resided together in the past
- People who have a child in common
- If a woman is pregnant and the man alleged to be the father
- People involved in a current or past significant romantic or sexual relationship

Requesting a Family Violence Waiver

County Workers are supposed **to give everyone** these two forms at application, recertification and as part of the Employment Services (ES) overview.

- ✓ Family Violence Referral (DHS-3323)
 - ✓ Domestic Violence Information Brochure (DHS-3477)
-

Requesting a FV Waiver

Domestic Violence Information (DHS-3477)

Covers:

- Flexible Employment Waiver
- 60-Month Extension

Minnesota Department of Human Services
Domestic Violence Information

Domestic Violence Information

What is domestic violence?

Domestic violence or abuse is what someone says or does over and over again to make you feel afraid or to control you. People who are elderly, frail, have a disability, or who depend on others for assistance may not be able to protect themselves from domestic violence or abuse. Minnesota has a law to protect and assist people who are vulnerable to abuse or who are not able to care for themselves. The following are some examples of violence or abuse:

- Swearing or screaming at you
- Calling you names
- Taking money or property without permission or against your wishes
- Threatening to hurt you or others you care about
- Failing to provide care for you for someone whose responsibility it is to do so
- Not letting you leave your house
- Blaming you for everything that goes wrong
- Stalking you
- Being touched against your wishes or forced

to have care

Referrals to other organizations such as:

- Legal services support groups
- Advocacy with the police.

If you are in danger from domestic violence or abuse and need help, call the National Domestic Abuse Hotline at 800-799-7233, (TTY: 800-787-3224) or the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women at 800-289-6177. The Minnesota Domestic Violence Crisis phone number is: 800-223-1111.

The **Safe At Home (SAH) Program** is a Minnesota address confidentiality program that assists survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking by providing a substitute address for people who move or are about to move to a new location unknown to their aggressors. For information on this program, contact the Minnesota Secretary of State at 651-201-1399 or 866-723-3035.

Vulnerable adults

Call the Senior LinkAge Line at 800-333-2433 to report concerns and to help a vulnerable adult get needed protection and assistance. For more information, ask your worker for the "Help protect people who are frail

Requesting a Family Violence Waiver

Family Violence Referral (DHS-3323)

Covers:

- ✓ Referral to local DV program
- ✓ Flexible Employment Waiver
- ✓ 60-Month Extension
- ✓ VAWA Self-Petition Info

Clear Form

DHS-3323-ENG 1-11



Minnesota Department of Human Services

Family Violence Referral

Purpose:

This form tells victims of domestic abuse how to get help.

Help for Domestic Abuse:

- If you, or someone in your home is a victim of domestic abuse **the county can help you.**
If you want to know more or want to stop abuse you can talk to your worker or contact:

AGENCY	TELEPHONE NUMBER	
ADDRESS		
CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE

- **Some of the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) rules do not apply to domestic abuse victims.** You must tell us about the abuse and have a special employment plan that includes activities to help keep your family safe. Please talk to your worker or an advocate if you want to know about this. If your plan is approved, you will be excused from some of the rules.
- If you have used 60 months of MFIP you may be able to get more months. Please talk to your worker or an advocate if you want to know about this.
- You can also call the **National Domestic Violence Hot Line at (800) 799-7233 or Legal Aid at (888) 354-5522.**

Non-citizens:

If you are **not a United States citizen**, but are married to a United States citizen or a legal permanent resident, and you are a victim of domestic abuse you may be able to get help to get permanent residency. Tell your worker if you think you are one of these people. If you qualify, your worker will tell you how to get legal help.

Contact the agency below for help getting permanent residence status.

AGENCY	TELEPHONE NUMBER	
ADDRESS		
CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE

Requesting a Family Violence Waiver

Job Counselor Responsibility

- Once a client reveals to you that they are experiencing and requests a waiver, the counselor must refer client to a person trained in DV if the they are not already working with a DV Advocate.
- Counselor **MUST** ensure that client has that access.
- The counselor and the DV Specialist must assist client in developing an EP.
- Once the plan has been approved the Counselor must inform the Financial Worker.

Developing a FV Waiver Plan

- ✓ The employment counselor, participant, and Domestic Violence Specialist (or Domestic Violence Advocate, if participant as a community DV advocate) are always present at the creation, renewal, or removal of the waiver
- ✓ Discuss at the creation and three month review/possible revision of the plan to increase ES approved activities (education, counseling, job search, volunteer experience, etc.) that lead to engagement and employment
- ✓ Having a family violence waiver and an employment plan with these activities demonstrate support, shared resources and laying out of the steps toward a desired positive outcome for the participant



Helping MFIP Participants with Safety Planning

DV Specialist Main Goal:

Provide/assist with safety plan and referrals.

Ask about:

- Client's current living situation
- How the children are doing
- The emotional support the client has among family and friends
- If the client is open to getting or wants more information on Orders of Protection or any legal action

Next step: Provide appropriate resources

Possible Safety Activities (as seen in Employment Plans)

- Check in with a Domestic Violence Advocate
 - Carry a charged cell phone at all times
 - Change phone number(s)
 - Change locks and improve security of building
 - Investigate the possibility of court action
 - Inform school/day care of current situation
(and/or if the abuser is not authorized to pick up
the child[ren])
-

Possible Safety Activities (as seen in Employment Plans)

- Set up code words or arrangements at work to call the police
- Make a police report
- Children will work with a family violence advocate from the community or a battered women's program
- Attend counseling/support groups
- Change job sites, duties, or place unknown to abuser
- I will maintain contact with my advocate

Possible Safety Activities (Custom ideas)

- Change daily routes to and from work/school/places that you frequent
- Carry any protection orders at all times
- Develop a safety plan (with the children, in the home, on the bus, etc.)
- Explore housing options, including shelters.
- Update privacy preferences on any social media
- Block unwanted callers on phone
- Document all abuse and/or violations of any harassment orders in place
- Learn about your legal rights

Other Activities

Employment Counselors can include other activities that also leads to engagement and self-sufficiency

- Job Search
- Volunteer
- Paid Work Experience
- Employment
- Education



Non-Compliance

- ☐ Meet with the participant and a DV Specialist to go over whether the plan is still appropriate and is meeting the safety needs along with the EP
- ☐ Make changes if needed to the EP
- ☐ If the DV Specialist believes that the EP is still appropriate and the client continues to not comply, client loses the waiver.
- ☐ If it is determined that the client is to lose the waiver the financial worker needs to be notified immediately.
- ☐ EC follows FSS pre-sanction checklist

Communication and Support



How We Communicate

Verbal

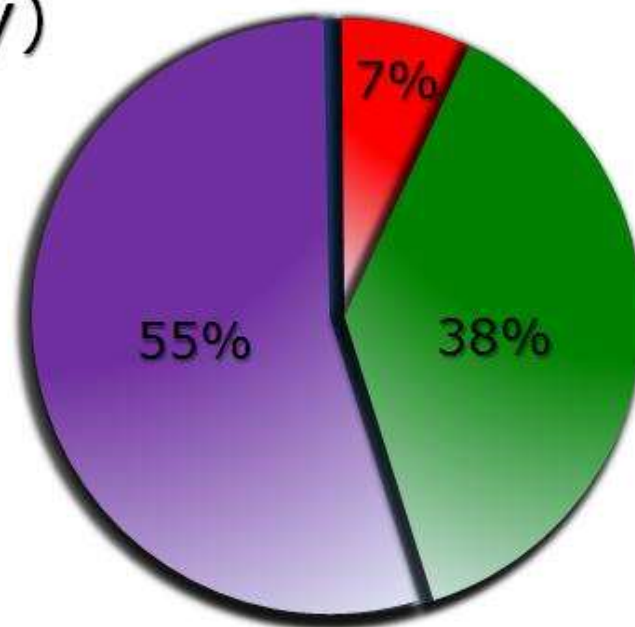
Words – (What we say)

Para-verbal

Tone (How we say it)

Non-verbal

Our Expressions and actions



What do I say?

- ❖ At first you may not have to say much
 - ❖ Listening to the participant
 - ❖ Asking open questions about what they have shared
 - ❖ Validating their experience
 - ❖ Be sincere and honest while listening and asking questions
-

What To Say?

DO's

1. Openly listen
2. Validate their experience
3. Thank them
4. Express concern
5. Empower and Encourage
6. Be honest about their options

DON'TS

1. Negatively Judge
2. Question if it happened
3. "You're wasting my time."
4. Disregard their concerns
5. Discourage
6. Tell them they only have one option

What if I say something wrong?

- ❖ Being thoughtful in the questions and the support you give will help to avoid this
 - ❖ Most participants won't mind you asking if you are sincere and open about in the way you ask
 - ❖ Let the victim know that you appreciate that they shared the DV with them
 - ❖ Acknowledge that you may not fully understand what they have gone/are going through BUT you are there to help
-

Resources

For information about the DV agencies in your area

United Way 211

651.291.0211 or 1.800.543.7709

www.211unitedway.org

Minnesota Center for Crime Victim Services

1-888-622-8799

<https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/ojp/help-for-crime-victims/pages/default.aspx>

Resources

The Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women

651.646.6177 or 1.800.289.6177

www.mcbw.org

St. Paul and Ramsey County Domestic Abuse Intervention Project: serves St. Paul

651-645-2824

www.stpaulintervention.org

Family Violence Waiver Resources

MFIP Manual:

http://www.dhs.state.mn.us/main/idcplg?IdcService=GET_FILE&RevisionSelectionMethod=LatestReleased&Rendition=Primary&allowInterrupt=1&noSaveAs=1&dDocName=dhs16_191337

ProJusticeMN.org: Statutory cites for all the different aspects of family violence waiver *(doesn't cover the Good Cause Waiver to Child Support Enforcement)*

http://www.projusticemn.org/mfip_manual/item.1338-M_Family_Violence_Waivers

It Takes a Village...

No one person, program or institution alone can end domestic violence..... but each response creates a ripple.

We don't always know what the impact of a person's action may be, but we believe all acts of caring and support will carry forward positive consequences.



Questions?