

The Source

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The Quarterly Newsletter of the Michigan Resource Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence

Domestic Violence in the Arab American Community

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Domestic violence is a major social and public health problem that crosses ethnic, racial, cultural, age, religious, national origin, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic lines. The problem of domestic violence is global. Around the world at least one woman in every three has been beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime. The consequences of domestic violence extend from psychological issues, such as posttraumatic stress disorder, to traumatic brain injury (TBI), to murder. The impact of domestic violence is not limited to women or partners—it can have serious effects on children too.

Barriers Facing Arab American Battered Women

Minority and immigrant battered women tend to suffer from a lack of services and accessibility problems. Members of these groups often experience difficulties in their interaction with health and social services that were designed for the host population. Minority and immigrant women usually lack financial and legal resources, which may trap them in abusive relationships. The battered woman may be incapable of independent financial survival. The difficulty in leaving a batterer is exacerbated by the fact that the batterer is often also the legal sponsor of the immigrant woman. New immigrant women have limited personal resources and skills, such as education, income, and English language competency. In Dearborn, which has a large Arab American population, limited English proficiency is one of the most difficult barriers facing immigrants. Often immigrant women are also unfamiliar with social services and community resources.

As is the case with all batterers, abusers of immigrant women from Arab countries use cultural values and norms as powerful weapons in controlling their victims' behavior. Batterers may

accuse their victims of dishonoring their families by reporting abuse to the police. Many others may accuse their victims of inappropriate social and cultural behavior. Many more may embarrass their victims in the immigrant community by fabricating lies about their victim's culturally unacceptable behaviors. Fear of deportation is another powerful threat that abusers use to control their victims. Many abusers threaten their victims with deportation if they report abuse. Many abusers fail to process immigration papers for their victims in order to have more control over their victims' immigration and naturalization status. Victims may fear that, if deported, they will lose custody of their children or that they will be unable to see their children after deportation.

Immigrants from Arab countries generally share cultural beliefs and attitudes, including reluctance to access social and healthcare services. The majority of these barriers are related to stigma, in terms of having a sense of shame of what relatives and friends might think of them if they seek outside help. Many report fear of exposing their private lives to strangers.

The cultural beliefs about domestic violence that immigrants bring with them also hinder their utilization of services. Some Arab Americans reject intervention by formal bodies, such as police and social welfare departments. Many Arab Americans seek the help of relatives or religious leaders because seeking the help of political and community leaders is considered inappropriate. Should a marital dispute arise, the immediate family and close relatives of the spouses are the first to be involved in attempting to influence the couple's marital stability. This is usually done through emphasizing the moral role and holiness of family values, and through stressing the importance of the family's continuity for the sake of the children and for saving face of the extended family as a whole. Keeping the family together has significant cultural and social value, even if both spouses are unhappy with each other. Divorce may bring shame and embarrassment upon the Arab woman herself and upon her entire family. Therefore, Arab women experience

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National Domestic Violence Hotline
Linea Nacional sobre la Violencia Domestica

1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

TTY 1-800-787-3224

Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network
(RAINN)

1-800-656-HOPE (4673)

New Print Resources

- **Safe Dates: An Adolescent Dating Abuse Prevention Curriculum**
- **Practical Tools for Domestic Violence Advocates Addressing Substance Abuse**
- **Effective Helping: Interviewing and Counseling Techniques**
- **Child Sexual Abuse in Civil Cases: A Guide to Custody and Tort Actions**
- **Managing at the Leading Edge: New Challenges in Managing Nonprofit Organizations**
- **The Executive Director's Survival Guide: Thriving As Nonprofit Leader**
- **Cultivating Diversity in Fundraising**
- **Walking Together: Working With Women from Diverse Religious and Spiritual Traditions: A Guide for Domestic Violence Advocates**

Effective Helping: Interviewing and Counseling Techniques

Thousands of readers have become effective and empathic helpers with author Barbara Okun's practical introduction to human relations counseling. Logical, easy-to-understand, and applicable, the book's unique framework will help you enhance your self-awareness, increase your understanding of contemporary social forces, and appreciate what happens in effective helping. Plus, Okun's blend of hands on exercises, examples, and just the right amount of theory will provide you with the necessary skills to develop genuine and compassionate relationships.

This practical book features coverage of multicultural issues; discussion of solution focused therapies; ecological perspectives; an emphasis on multidisciplinary teamwork; discussion of major theories, approaches, and current trends; coverage of crisis situations and strategies of helping; and attention to emergent ethical issues in changing treatment context.

To borrow a copy of this book, please contact the Michigan Resource Center at (517) 381-4663.

A National Resource Directory & Handbook on Preventing Child Sexual Abuse

This directory brings together many of the currently available resources and initiatives related to child sexual abuse prevention, providing descriptions of organizations, programs, projects and a wide range of resources. It offers user-friendly icons to assist you in locating specific types of resources. This 264 page manual also features category indices, resource bibliographies, and highlights related research and key stakeholders. To access an electronic copy of this publication, please visit <http://www.nsvrc.org/publications/directories.html>.

Professional Guide for Identifying Sexual Assault in Individuals with Developmental Disabilities

Created as a companion piece to "Sexual Assault Prevention for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities," this educational resource is designed to educate professionals who work with developmentally disabled individuals on sexual assault and how to reduce their clients' risk. The resource is an easy-to-navigate Microsoft PowerPoint presentation with accompanying presenter's notes. A CD with the presentation and PowerPoint software is included.

To borrow this guide, please contact the Michigan Resource Center at (517) 381-4663.

Annie and Andy: Storybooks on Working with Child Victims of Sexual Abuse

This story is about a child who is afraid to tell anyone when she/he is touched by someone in an inappropriate and confusing way. This newly revised 19-page story is available as a book featuring a young girl, Annie, as the primary character or a book featuring a young boy, Andy, as the primary character. Both books have a similar storyline and are for use with children, ages 4 to 8.

Annie and Andy are excellent resources for mental health professionals, human service workers, guidance counselors, teachers, nurses, physicians and others who are looking for a tool to help children learn they don't have to keep secrets that hurt.

Sexual abuse is always difficult to talk about. Annie and Andy introduce the subject in a non-threatening manner. The concept of "secret touches" is also addressed and children are assured there are some secrets that are not to be kept.

To borrow these books, please contact the Michigan Resource Center at (517) 381-4663.

Hidden Scars, Silent Wounds: Understanding Self-Injury

This video investigates the phenomenon of self-injury. Self-injury refers to a pattern in which a person harms himself or herself by cutting or even burning parts of the body to relieve stress from pent-up emotions. Many people suffer from this usually secretive activity. Typically they have endured unusual and stressful events or abusive family situations, and have resorted to self-injury as an unhealthy coping mechanism. The video and print package demystifies this often misunderstood problem by offering candid interviews with "cutters" and their families, as well as commentary by noted experts in the field. Viewers learn about the symptoms and causes of self-injury along with effective knowledge to sufferers and their families. The Teacher's Resource Book includes class worksheets to expand students' investigation of this subject.

To borrow the video, please contact the Michigan Resource Center at (517) 381-4663.

Have a suggestion?
The Resource Center welcomes your suggestions for materials to add to the collection. Send us an email at resource@mcadsv.org or call us at (517) 381-4663, ext. 17

Using the Internet to Raise Funds and Build Donor Relationships

Most organizations today understand the importance of the Internet for increasing fundraising dollars and improving donor loyalty. The Internet is an efficient channel for nonprofits to reach even more people and increase support. This guide was created specifically for nonprofit professionals as a handbook about the fundamentals of online fundraising. It describes how to build a file of e-mail addresses, develop strong online relationships with constituents and execute effective online fundraising campaigns that turn those constituents into loyal donors. This guide also covers some of the basics of email marketing — the cornerstone of any online program.

For an electronic copy of this guidebook, please contact the Michigan Resource Center at (517) 381-4663.

A Survivor's Story

Olga Trujillo grew up in a family ravaged by violence. In this intimate account of her life, Olga shares the terror of witnessing her father's brutal attacks on her mother and reveals the horrific physical, emotional and sexual abuse she herself endured.

With clarity as unique as it is insightful, she unravels the connections between her childhood abuse and the rapes she suffered as a teenager and young woman. Her inspirational story sheds light on the complexities of coping with trauma, the struggle towards healing and what it means to truly survive.

A Survivor's Story is a 45-minute video presented in four ten-minute segments which include witnessing, childhood, adolescence and healing. This video is ideal for trainings, conferences and discussion groups.

To borrow this video, please contact the Michigan Resource Center at (517) 381-4663.

Advocacy & Shelter Information Packet

This booklet provides information about the role of advocates, and the provision of advocacy and shelter to women who have been battered and their children. The goal is to create a basic understanding about the nature of advocacy, shelter and social change. The packet also contains sample forms needed for shelter and outreach advocacy programming.

To borrow this resource, please contact the Michigan Resource Center at (517) 381-4663.

Sibling Abuse: Hidden Physical, Emotional, and Sexual Trauma

With increased media attention, issues of family violence have been steadily moving out of the shadows and into the arenas of research, prevention, intervention and public awareness. However, sibling abuse—largely unrecognized and unaddressed—remains behind closed doors of “family privacy.” Often excused by parents as “kids will be kids” behavior, the symptoms of this form of abuse go undetected and its devastating effects on the victim are ignored. *Sibling Abuse* provides insight into this form of abuse and carefully describes the range of abusive behaviors perpetrated among siblings. Along with personal accounts by adult survivors, this completely updated book describes appropriate steps for parents to take in order to evaluate and respond to their children's abusive interactions. A new chapter on current techniques of assessment and treatments also helps therapists or counselors work to end this problem.

To borrow this book, please contact the Michigan Resource Center at (517) 381-4663.

Domestic Violence: A Competency-Based Training Manual for Community Mental Health Center Staff

The effects of domestic violence have long been associated with many mental health issues, including depression, substance abuse, and suicidal tendencies. In fact, studies have shown that domestic violence is often a precursor to many mental health issues. Therefore, in order to effectively assist clients, it is important that community mental health counselors correctly identify those who are victims of domestic violence and abuse.

Domestic Violence: A Competency-Based Training Manual for Community Mental Health Center Staff was developed to help community mental health counselors identify their clients affected by domestic abuse. In addition to chapters on the dynamics of domestic violence, overcoming rural barriers, and utilizing community resources, it contains information specific to the effects of domestic violence on those with mental health problems and important information on the interaction between substance abuse and domestic violence. The heart of the manual teaches professionals to spot the signs of abuse, how to ask a potential victim about abuse, and how to assist victims with special services.

To access this resource electronically, please visit <http://familyvio.ssw.fsu.edu/rural/community.html>.

New Video Resources

Understanding Sexual Violence: The Judge's Role in Stranger and Nonstranger Rape and Sexual Assault Cases

This video is structured around a case study that follows the various stages of a trial. It provides the most current social science research about how different victims react during and after the assault, rape related post-traumatic stress disorder, sex offenders and sex offender sentencing and treatment, and jurors' attitudes towards rape. This information is presented in the context of its implications for conduct of the pretrial and trial process, jury selection, assessment of force and consent, evidentiary decisions, pleas and sentencing.

Visit us on the Web!



Access the entire Resource Center Collection and order materials online at www.mcadsv.org/mrcdsv

The Michigan Resource Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence is a collaboration of the Michigan Domestic Violence Prevention and Treatment Board and the Michigan Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence.

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MICHIGAN
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
PREVENTION &
TREATMENT BOARD



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tremendous pressure to remain in abusive relationships.

Arab Americans in Michigan

In Michigan, there are about 450,000 Arab Americans, and 40% of this population were born outside of the United States. They tend to have higher than average education and median income. There is a lot of misunderstanding and negative stereotyping of Arab Americans. There is a great degree of diversity among Arab Americans in religion, education, economic levels, and degree of Westernization. Many do not speak, read, or write English. Communication styles are more expressive, vibrant, and rather loud. Arab Americans tend to use their hands when they talk, and they express emotions easily. Family is the basic social unit, with strong connections to extended family. Arab societies are patriarchic, with conservative attitudes toward sexual behavior. Girls and boys are usually separated from pre-puberty, and pre-marital sex is forbidden. In Islam, divorce is allowed, though Arab Americans try to resolve conflicts without divorce.

About half of Arab Americans are Moslem and the other half are Christian. Islam, which started in 609 AD, believes in one God (Allah) and requires the belief in Jesus, Moses, Aaron, and other prophets. The relationship between the individual and God is direct and does not require any mediator. In addition, Moslems practice prayers five times daily, one month of fasting from dawn to sunset annually, paying alms to the poor and needy, and a pilgrimage visit to Mecca once in a lifetime by those who can.

Arranged marriages are common, particularly where marriage brings families together. Men usually assume the role of the breadwinner and women assume the role of homemaker. The elderly enjoy much respect from the young. The value of honor and the concept of shame when breaking the honor play a very important and even serious role in the lives of Arab Americans. For example, pre-marital sex can bring shame to the whole family, not only to the individual. Many Moslem women cover with hijab (a scarf covering the hair, ears, and throat) although it is not

considered a requirement by many other Moslem women.

Serving Arab American Survivors of Domestic Abuse

Attitudes toward domestic violence still need a lot of work to incorporate the recognition that domestic abuse is not acceptable. There is a need to help change the rigid sex role stereotypes and to appreciate women's social role and intrinsic value. Clarification of the high status that Islam gave to women as mothers, sisters, daughters, and life companions can help eliminate these negative social stereotypes.

Service providers can take several steps toward making their services more accessible to Arab American women. Most importantly, service providers must recognize and respect the cultural beliefs and practices of Arab women. When receiving services, Arab Americans prefer separation of the sexes. They also prefer a female social worker or a female physician for girls and women. As alcohol and pork are prohibited in Islam, these beliefs should be respected in residential facilities. Through better understanding of Arab American culture and practices, service providers can become better equipped to create an environment where Arab American women experience what all victims of domestic violence need —genuine acceptance without prejudice. *Mohammad Farrag, Ph.D., is the Clinical Director of ACCESS Mental Health Services, ACCESS Center for Psychosocial Rehabilitation for Victims of Torture in Dearborn, Michigan.*

Mission Based Management

This book is a practical, no-nonsense guide to running a not-for-profit organization. The author, Peter C. Brinckerhoff, focuses on 'mission' in the organization and dives into the everyday operation and management of the organization including: board function, managing people, social entrepreneurship and more. *Mission Based Management* is filled with answers to some of the more complex questions in running a not-for-profit. Also included is an updated list of core characteristics of successful not-for-profits and a chapter on using technology to improve mission outcomes.

This book also discusses the responsibility of the not-for-profit to make money, outlining the fiscal responsibility of the director and board. It touches on the issue of setting up a profit making arm of a non-profit, and the important, yet complex relationship between the not-for-profit and government.

This book is a must for new directors and administrators in the not-for-profit world and important reading for those who have been in the not-for-profit world for years.

To borrow a copy of this book, please contact the Michigan Resource Center at (517) 381-4663.

Volunteer Opportunities Available at the Michigan Resource Center!

The Michigan Resource Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence is seeking volunteers to assist with the management of the Resource Center. For more information on volunteer opportunities, please contact Melissa Limon at (517) 381-4663, ext.17.