

Study material in the project

**„IMPROVING VICTIM SUPPORT DURING CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS: ANTI-TRAFFICKING TRAINING FOR THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM”**



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Tallinn 2015



## CONTENTS

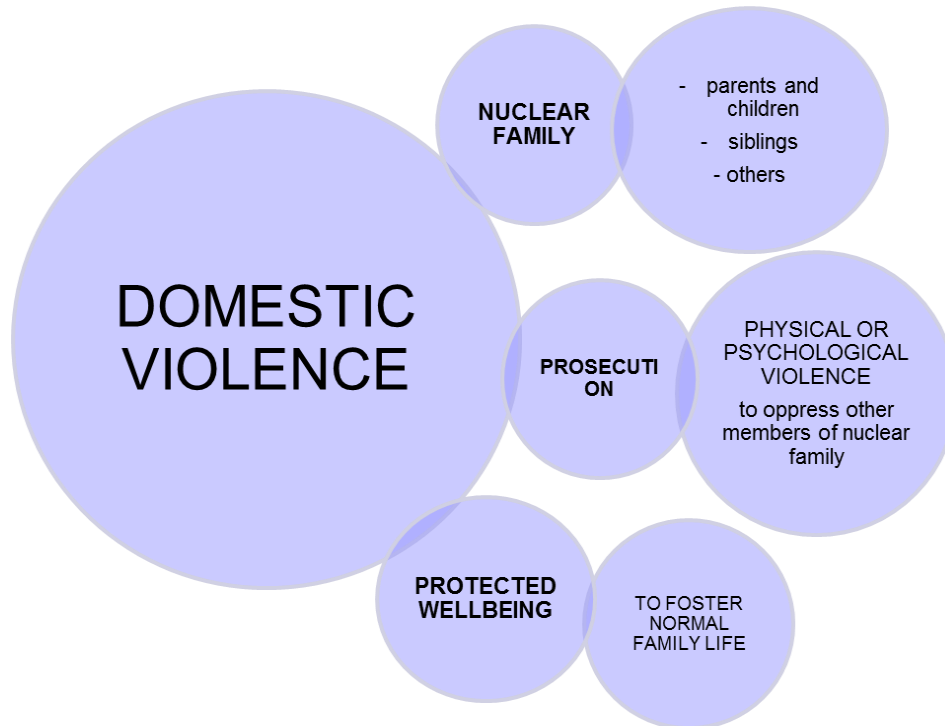
INTRODUCTION .....	3
WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE? .....	4
TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS .....	6
GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE .....	8
SIGNS CHARACTERISTIC OF A VICTIM.....	10
Signs related to physical and psychological health .....	11
Signs related to relationships.....	12
Signs related to economic situation.....	12
REASONS WHY VICTIMS DO NOT LEAVE .....	13
SIGNS CHARACTERISTIC OF AN ABUSER.....	15
CYCLE OF ABUSE .....	17
TYPES OF VIOLENCE.....	19
CONSEQUENCES .....	21
MYTHS AND FACTS .....	26
ADVICE TO INVESTIGATIVE AUTHORITIES .....	29
VICTIM-FRIENDLY INVESTIGATION .....	32
How to treat a victim coming to the police to report an offence against him or her? .....	32
Techniques for dealing with the victim .....	34
Advice on questioning the victim.....	35
Advice to police officers .....	36
REFERENCES .....	40

## INTRODUCTION

In the framework of the project “Improving Victim Support during Criminal Proceedings: Anti-Trafficking Training for the Criminal Justice System”, a training course took place in Tallinn on April 9-10, 2014, discussing victims of both domestic violence and trafficking in human beings as well as the related international legislation. The training resulted in preparation of a study material intended for specialists who encounter victims of trafficking in human beings and domestic violence in their work.

The training material includes slides concerning trafficking in human beings and domestic violence, accompanied by explanations. The study material is sufficient for a 2-day training course.

## WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?



The Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence defines domestic violence as follows: domestic violence means all acts of physical, sexual, psychological or economic violence that occur within the family or domestic unit or between former or current spouses or partners, whether or not the perpetrator shares or has shared the same residence with the victim.

Domestic violence includes the following situations:

- violence directed against current/former spouse/cohabitee, hereinafter intimate partner violence,
- child abuse,
- violence against (grand)parents,
- violence between siblings.

The definition of domestic violence does not determine the place of an incident. A violent incident may take place at the victim's or the perpetrator's home or outside it, for example on a street, at someone else's place or elsewhere.

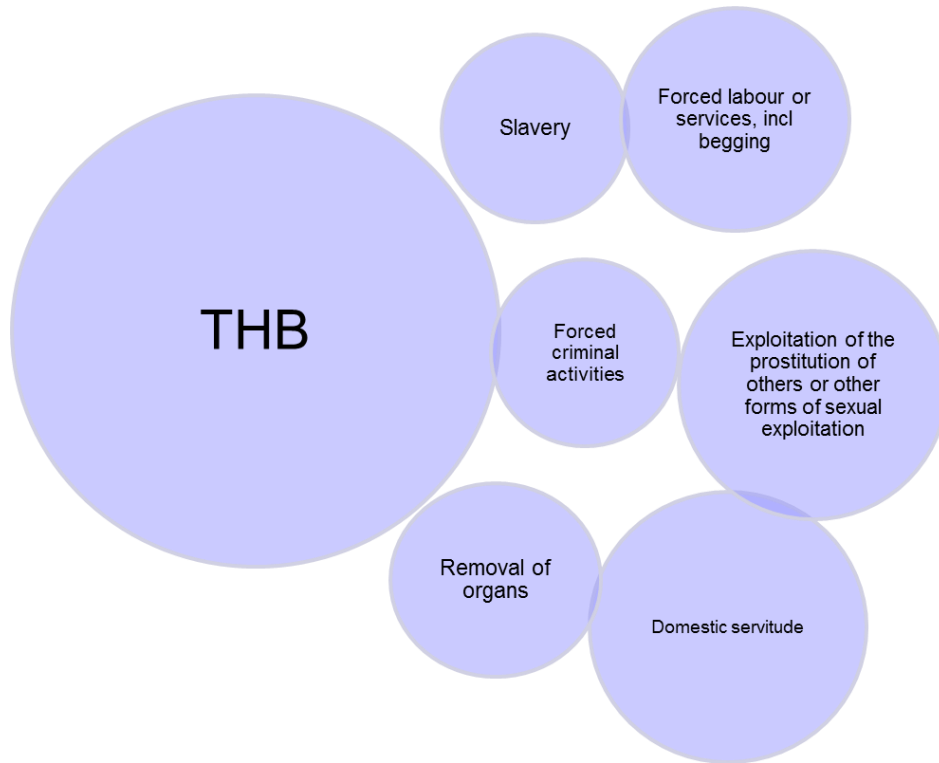
**Intimate partner violence** can be considered an act committed by current or former spouse, cohabitee or partner which entails controlling behaviour, psychological, physical or economical violence or sexual coercion and which may cause the victim psychological harm and physical pain. Violence may continue after the end of the relationship, therefore the place of residence of the victim and the abuser is not a determinant.

**Violence against women** means all acts of gender-based violence that result in, or are likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life. In the material at hand, violence against women is considered only in the context of family and intimate relationships.

**Child abuse** may be defined as physical, psychological or sexual abuse, neglect or mistreatment of a child below 18 years of age which may jeopardise or harm the child's health and wellbeing and is committed by a person being responsible for the child's wellbeing. A child's witnessing of violence between parents or other family members must also be considered child abuse.

**Abuse of parents** can be considered as psychological, physical or sexual violence or economic exploitation of parents or neglect or abandonment of parents if unable to cope on their own, committed by their minor or adult children.

## TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS



### Slavery

Debt bondage – the most commonly used form of slavery. Labour or services are seen as a repayment for a debt or other obligation. The services required to repay the debt may be undefined, also the duration may be undefined.

Forced labour – a situation where people are employed against their will by the threat of violence or other kind of punishment<sup>1</sup>. Their freedom is limited and they are treated as property.

Child labour – refers to employment of children which may be harmful to child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. It may interfere the ability to attend school.

The victims' profiles can be diverse including children, teenagers, women and men. The victims of slavery can be occupied on legal activities, e.g in factories, on construction, as cleaners, nannies, housekeepers or caretakers, or on illegal activities, e.g as drug smugglers.

<sup>1</sup> International Labour Organization (ILO) defines forced labour as all involuntary work or service exacted under the menace of a penalty.

## Sexual exploitation

Prostitution – practice of engaging in sexual relations in exchange for payment which can be the main or the only source of income for the person. This includes prostitution on the streets and in brothels, escort services, strip clubs etc. The elements of THB appear in pimping, recruiting or other prostitution related activities.

Prostitution is often accompanied by pornography, which means the person prostituting is photographed and/or filmed. The recordings may also be used for extortion or blackmailing.

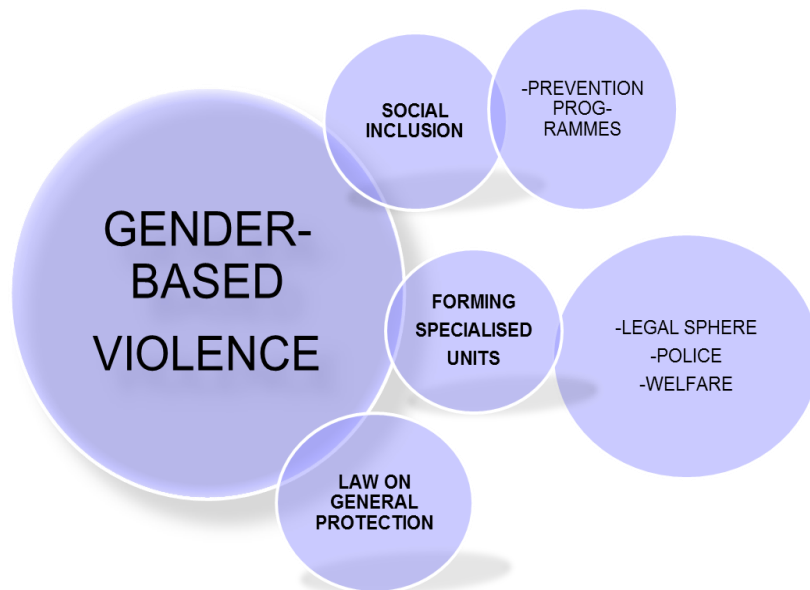
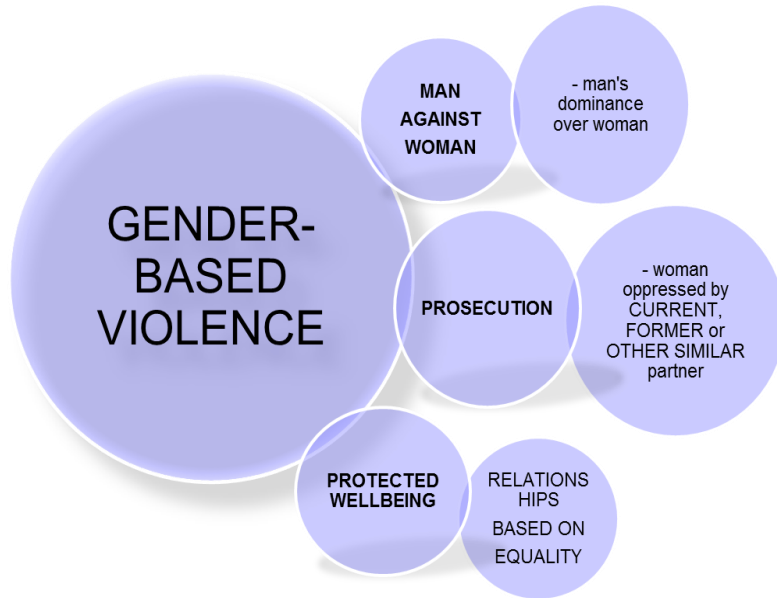
### **The most common misconceptions about trafficking in human beings<sup>2</sup>:**

- “Trafficking in human beings is not a risk for normal people, like me and my friends.” “Nice people”, “orderly people” are somehow out of question to have improper and violent family relationships. It is presumed that violence can occur only in families of poor, unemployed and alcohol-abusing people, the so-called asocial families.
- “The victims brought the trafficking on themselves by being too naïve.”
- “A trafficker is recognisable, looking and acting like a criminal.”
- “Job offers made by acquaintances can be trusted.”
- “You can learn the language and customs of the destination country in a couple of weeks on-site if necessary. A positive attitude and English language is enough for a start.”
- “You don’t need a work permit and an employment contract if you only work abroad for a short period of time.”
- “Income is easily earned in a welfare state.”

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<sup>2</sup>IOM Handbook: [http://sm.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/eesmargid\\_ja\\_tegevused/Sooline\\_vordoiguslikkus/Inimkaubandus\\_ja\\_prostitusioon/inimkaubanduse\\_ennetamine\\_metodoloogia\\_tooks\\_noortega.pdf](http://sm.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/eesmargid_ja_tegevused/Sooline_vordoiguslikkus/Inimkaubandus_ja_prostitusioon/inimkaubanduse_ennetamine_metodoloogia_tooks_noortega.pdf)

## GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE



Gender-based violence is violence that is directed against a person because of that person's gender, gender identity or gender expression or that affects persons of a particular gender disproportionately. It may result in physical, sexual, emotional or psychological harm, or economic loss, to the victim.<sup>3</sup> Gender-based violence reflects and reinforces inequality

<sup>3</sup> Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2001/220/JHA

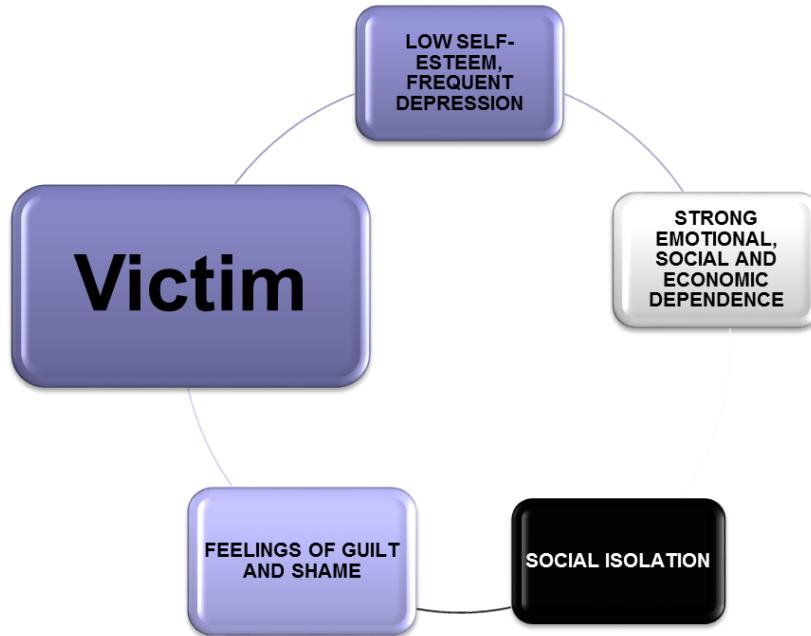


between men and women and includes violence in close relationships, sexual violence (including rape, sexual assault and harassment), trafficking in human beings, slavery, and different forms of harmful practices, such as forced marriages, female genital mutilation and so-called honour crimes.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2001/220/JHA

## SIGNS CHARACTERISTIC OF A VICTIM



The following is a list of indicators particularly characteristic of women being violence victims.

**Low self-esteem** – Repeated experience of violence, humiliation and blaming will significantly lower a woman’s self-esteem and sense of self. The victim may feel that she is worth nothing and cannot accomplish anything. Loss of belief in herself and a feeling of inferiority lower the victim’s will to act, her ability to adequately assess the violence that occurred and herself and to find a solution to the situation.

**Feelings of guilt and shame** – Violence makes the victim feel guilty and ashamed. Those feelings are reinforced by the partner laying blame on her. The feeling of guilt makes the victim think of herself as the one being responsible for the violence. Feelings of guilt and shame reduce the victim’s willingness to talk about the incident and to seek help.

**Fear** – An experience of violence makes the victim feel fear. Repeat violence makes the feeling of fear a systematic feeling, i.e. the victim may feel fear even while the partner is not directly violent or is away from home altogether. For example, a victim may be severely afraid if the abuser remains away from home unusually long in the evening, arrives being intoxicated, slams the door when entering or if the woman herself drops a vase or her cooking gets burned. In the course of a long violent cohabitation, the victim has learned to notice signs that “may trigger” the partner’s violent reaction. Noticing such signs is a danger signal to the victim, triggering fear or even a panic attack in her.

**Defensive reactions** – Repeated experience of violence causes the victim to have instinctive defensive reactions. For example, if during a conversation the other person raises their voice or makes a sudden movement, the woman may flinch or raise her hands to her face.

**Over-eager adaptation and suppression of own wishes and needs** – While living in a violent relationship, the victim tries to avoid situations that may disturb the abuser and lead him to act violently. The victim hopes (and the abuser often expresses the opinion) that if the victim acts according to the abuser’s expectations, he will not use violence. Therefore, the victim tries to adapt to the abuser’s demands, ignoring her own interests and making her own self non-existent. This kind of behaviour may also extend to other activities and relationships outside the home.

**Withdrawing and personality changes** – The partner’s violent behaviour and his controlling and isolating manner of dealing with the woman may make her withdrawn and absent, as well as careful or even avoidant in conversations with other people (incl. friends and acquaintances).

**Negative experiences in childhood and/or previous intimate relationships** – Many victims have witnessed violence between their parents or have been abused in childhood. A cold or even outright antagonistic relationship between the parents can have an effect on the quality of the victim’s intimate relationships. One parent’s violent and subordinating behaviour towards the other may teach a victim that her gender is indeed supposed to obey men and that men’s violence towards victim is justified if the woman errs. It may happen that mothers having experienced intimate partner violence tell their daughters to obey their husband’s wishes and to refrain from arguing with them. The role of a violence victim is reinforced by experiencing violence in various intimate relationships.

**Excusing or justifying the abuser’s behaviour, denying the violence** – Similarly to the abuser, the violence victims themselves also tend to justify, excuse or even deny their partner’s violent acts. Victims may give wholly different names to the occurred violence, names that strongly disguise the actual meaning and severity of what has transposed (for example, hitting or kicking is renamed into “punishing”, “being mad”). Victims feel that they are responsible for and guilty of the incidents; they may also look for outside reasons for their partner’s violence (e.g. “bad friends” and alcohol). Changing the violence’s meaning, excusing it or diminishing its consequences function as coping strategies which victims tend to use in the case of long-term violence. In a hopeless and seemingly unending situation, it may be more “self-preserving” for the victim to think of the violence and the partner’s aggression as less negative instead of facing the truth.

### **Signs related to physical and psychological health**

- Direct physical injuries (wounds, bruises, broken bones, dislocations, broken teeth, internal injuries, etc.);
- Pains, movement difficulties;
- Hiding bruises or other injuries with makeup or clothes, saying they come from falling or some unclear cause;
- Health problems developed over a longer period, frequent illnesses (high blood pressure, frequent headaches, abdominal and back pains, chronic and/or progressive illnesses);
- Attention problems, difficulties with concentration (for example, the victim is unable to complete her work duties in optimum time, makes mistakes);
- Problems with sleep, psychosomatic symptoms, eating disorders;
- Panic attacks;
- Isolation;
- Depressive nature or diagnosed depression (profound, chronic depression);
- Unwanted pregnancy (making the woman

- Frequent negative feelings (sadness, apathy, uselessness, guilt, anxiety, desperation, etc.);
- A feeling of *going crazy*;
- Frequent negative feelings (sadness, apathy, uselessness, guilt, anxiety, desperation, etc.);
- Pregnant may be the abuser's knowing wish in order to reinforce the woman's bond with him);
- Spontaneous abortions;
- Lowered interest towards sex;
- Loss of will to live, suicidal thoughts and acts.

### Signs related to relationships

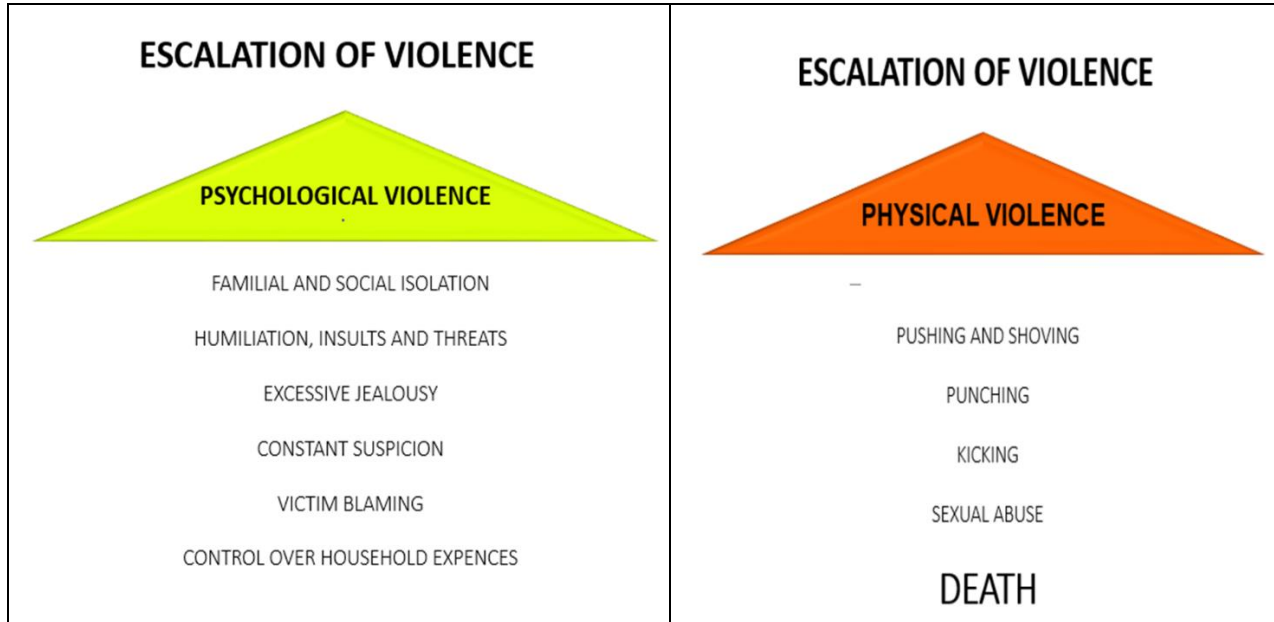
- Loss of respect and esteem in the eyes of children (especially if the father belittles the mother in their presence, or if the father pays attention to them while the mother is unable to do so due to her injuries or emotional distress caused by the violence);
- Inability to care sufficiently for the children;
- Aggressiveness towards children (being resentful and emotionally irritated due to violence, the woman may yell at the children or physically order them around and hit them);
- Avoiding conversations with relatives, friends and acquaintances (the man prohibits the woman from conversing with them or constantly belittles her relatives/friends and disapproves communication with them, the woman is afraid or ashamed to admit the occurrence of violence);
- Abandoning her hobbies or habitual ways of recreation;
- Distrust towards strangers (especially men).

### Signs related to economic situation

- Economic dependence on the abuser may stem from the situation (small children, unemployment, etc.) or be caused by the man (the man taking away money from the woman, restricting her financial transactions, not paying alimony, prohibiting or hindering the woman from having a job);
- The abuser damaging the items or property belonging to the victim;
- The abuser not paying subsistence to the victim;
- In a breakup, the abuser not moving out of the dwelling belonging to the victim;
- Loss of capacity for work or loss of job due to psychological and physical consequences of violence (e.g. being on sick leave due to depression or injuries; difficulties with concentration).

In summary, it can be said that long-term violence increases the victim's submissiveness and vulnerability which, in combination with stereotypic attitudes towards gender roles, may lead to yet another victimisation (in the next intimate relationship). The effects of various violent incidents over time are cumulative. For example, the symptoms of earlier traumas may trigger much more extreme emotional reactions in later violent incidents, making the victim more and more helpless and defenceless against next assaults. Long-term intimate partner violence is destructive to health and may render the victim dependent on the violent partner – due to poor health and economic difficulties, victims feel unable to cope independently, especially if their self-esteem is very low and their supportive social network is lacking. That way, victims may remain in a closed circle of violence for many years (or even for life).

## REASONS WHY VICTIMS DO NOT LEAVE



Leaving a violent spouse or partner is significantly more difficult than it seems for someone outside of the relationship who has not experienced violence. Therefore, it is wrong to reproach the victim for remaining in the violent relationship. The victim may also be unwilling or unable to (immediately) end the relationship. In an especially acute situation, the victim may be incapable on making such a weighty decision at all. The following is a list of reasons that may hinder a violence victim from seeking help, talking about the incidents and leaving the relationship:

- Fear and sense of danger. The victim is afraid that the partner could look her up after the breakup and then use even more severe violence as revenge.
- The violent partner threatening to kill himself, the victim or even the children.
- The victim fearing that the partner may deprive her of the children, start manipulating them or hurt them in some other way.
- The victim may be afraid of stigmatising. She may fear that other people, incl. specialists will not believe her tales of violence or may blame her for it.
- The victim may be emotionally attached to the partner, regardless of the latter's violent behaviour. The partner is seen as a person whom she fell in love with and shared several positive experiences with.
- The victim may believe that the partner will change and not use violence anymore.
- Limited material resources and difficulties in coping (together with children).
- Proprietary/legal bonds (e.g. joint loans, dwelling, etc.). For example, ending the relationship may be a complex matter for the victim because if the joint dwelling is given to her, she will need to pay half of its price to the partner. The victim may not have that kind of money.
- A disability or health problems, due to which the victim needs the help of another person to cope with daily life.

- Limited knowledge about opportunities to get help, or the necessary services being unavailable to the victim (e.g. the shelter being too far from her place of residence or work, not enough money for legal assistance).
- The victim's leaving may also be hindered by the violent partner himself. For example, regardless of the partner's negative attitude towards the victim, humiliating and belittling her, the partner is generally not motivated to end the relationship. The partner may e.g. directly or indirectly hamper the victim from leaving and obtaining of help.

Direct means of hampering may include:

- Restricting the opportunities to communicate (e.g. taking away or breaking her telephone, restricting her use of computer);
- Physically isolating (e.g. locking her inside the home);
- Taking away documents and/or money/bank cards from her.

Indirect means of hampering may include:

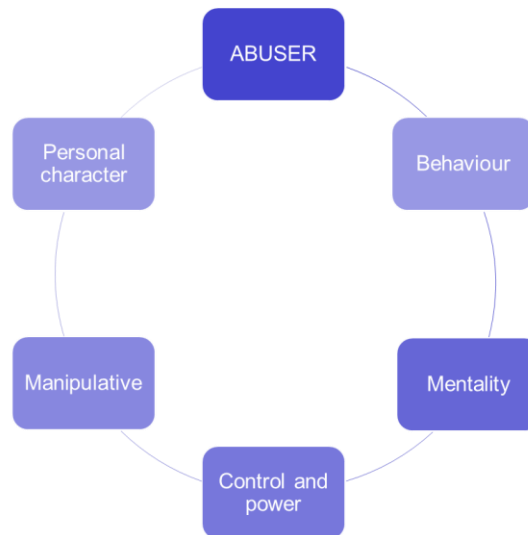
- Restricting her independent coping (making it difficult for her to find or attend a job i.e. earning her own subsistence);
- Spreading lies in the community, incl. lying to the local government officials.

The foregoing list of factors hindering the ending of the relationship is especially characteristic of women who have experienced violence. First, several factors in the list refer to violence based on power and control, and women are much more often subjected to that than men. Second, the common attitudes in our society are that the woman is the main party responsible for preserving harmony in a family and is supposed to obey the man.

Men have extreme difficulties with publicly talking about victimisation and seeking help, because they perceive victimisation as a strongly stigmatising sign. Men may consider talking about violence an expression of their own weakness and inaptitude. Acquiescence, as well as acknowledgment of their problems and of their inability to cope are strongly conflicting with their perceived role of being a man. This is why men shy away from asking for help in the case of violence problems, as they are afraid to seem unmanly.

**NB!** Violence does not end with breaking up! Very often the violence continues (especially psychological violence and controlling behaviour, but also physical violence) even after ending the relationship. It has also been observed that violent incidents may become more frequent and severe during the breakup.

## SIGNS CHARACTERISTIC OF AN ABUSER



The following list characterises a person using violence. The listed behaviours here refer primarily to instrumental violence which is mostly used by men. The signs describe abusers in relationships with not only women but also their children.

**Using a controlling model of communication with the partner.** The abuser constantly wants to know what the partner is doing, where she is going, with whom she is communicating or meeting. The abuser sets restrictions on the partner's movement, for example expecting the partner to come home from work at exactly the right time.

**Sense of being privileged.** The abuser believes in being entitled to certain rights and privileges which entail no obligations and which do not extend to other members of the family. The family's whole life revolves around the abuser.

**Distorted view of self.** The abuser may have a characteristically self-centred, pompous and romantic view of himself. The abuser does not perceive himself as being violent and may not necessarily notice the consequences of his violence.

**Egocentrism and little capacity for empathy.** The abuser sees everything related to himself as being significant and important; he is unwilling/unable to notice the worries, wishes and needs of other family members and does not consider it important to address those.

**Unrealistic expectations and high demands concerning the behaviour of other family members.** The abuser expects (takes for granted) that the partner and other family members fulfil his orders. A failure to fulfil his demands may lead to "punishment".

**Strong sense of ownership.** The abuser perceives the children and the partner as a kind of property that he owns; therefore he expects them to submit to his wishes and orders.

**Confusing love and violence.** The abuser justifies the use of violence with loving and caring for the partner. He may use allegations like: “I wouldn’t get so upset if I didn’t love her so much”.

**Manipulating.** The abuser may manipulate the partner in order to control her behaviour, confuse her or paint an unfavourable (external) impression of her.

**Denying, justifying or excusing the use of violence, diminishing its consequences.** Abusers have a tendency to deny the violence, justify it (e.g. blaming the victim for behaving “wrongly”) or excuse it with external factors (alcohol intoxication, the victim provoking them). They may also consider severe consequences as something minute and not worth mentioning.

**Hiding and lying** – giving other people (particularly the next of kin) controversial information about their actions, lying or hiding those actions.

**Inducing guilty feelings and projecting the responsibility for one’s own behaviour onto others** – It is characteristic for an abuser to make his partner feel that she is guilty of something or has done something wrong, incl. concerning his own (improper) behaviour. He tends to deny an occurred violence or diminish it while excusing himself, blaming the victim and looking for external excuses for the incident (e.g. alcohol intoxication, hard day at work, unemployment, obtrusive friends, etc.).

**Extreme jealousy** – A violent man is characterised by exaggerated jealousy, and he may even be jealous of the partner’s friends and relatives. The jealousy is expressed as constant suspicions, inspections and blaming of the woman.

**Undermining the authority of the nonviolent parent** – The abuser may criticise the partner (the nonviolent parent) in the presence of children, saying that she is unintelligent, inapt and a bad parent, and using name-calling against her.

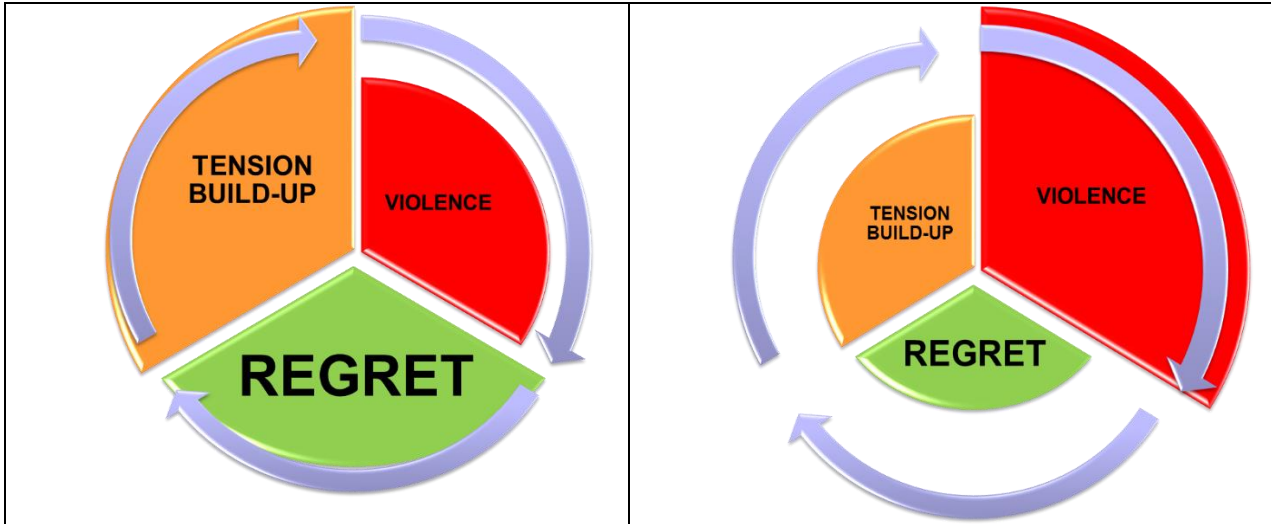
**Patriarchal attitudes and traditional gender roles** – Compared to nonviolent men, abusive men believe significantly more frequently that the man is the head of the family, the only decision-maker and the dominant party in the relationship while the woman is someone supposed to obey the man’s orders.

**Being two-faced** – With strangers, incl. with officials, the abuser may give the impression of a very polite, caring and peaceful person. He may also act completely differently towards the woman when others are present, compared to his behaviour at home.

In summary, it can be said that the abuser’s need to control, suspect or blame the victim or to feel jealousy is caused by the abuser’s inner anxiety and lack of confidence. In reality, abusers also have low self-esteem and they experience a role conflict, i.e. they perceive themselves as not corresponding to the society’s accepted ideal of a person, or rather to their own understanding of it.



## CYCLE OF ABUSE



Walker 1977

If a woman has remained in a violent relationship for a longer time, violence may start to repeat and become cyclic. Leonora Walker has characterised the occurrence of physical violence in an intimate relationship as three periodically repeating phases. She documented the **cycle of abuse** on the basis of interviews with 120 women having experienced physical violence. According to Walker, every phase may have different intensity and duration in different couples, but the cycles will repeat in a relationship and violence may escalate over time. Having been victimised once increases the probability of experiencing violence in the future as well.

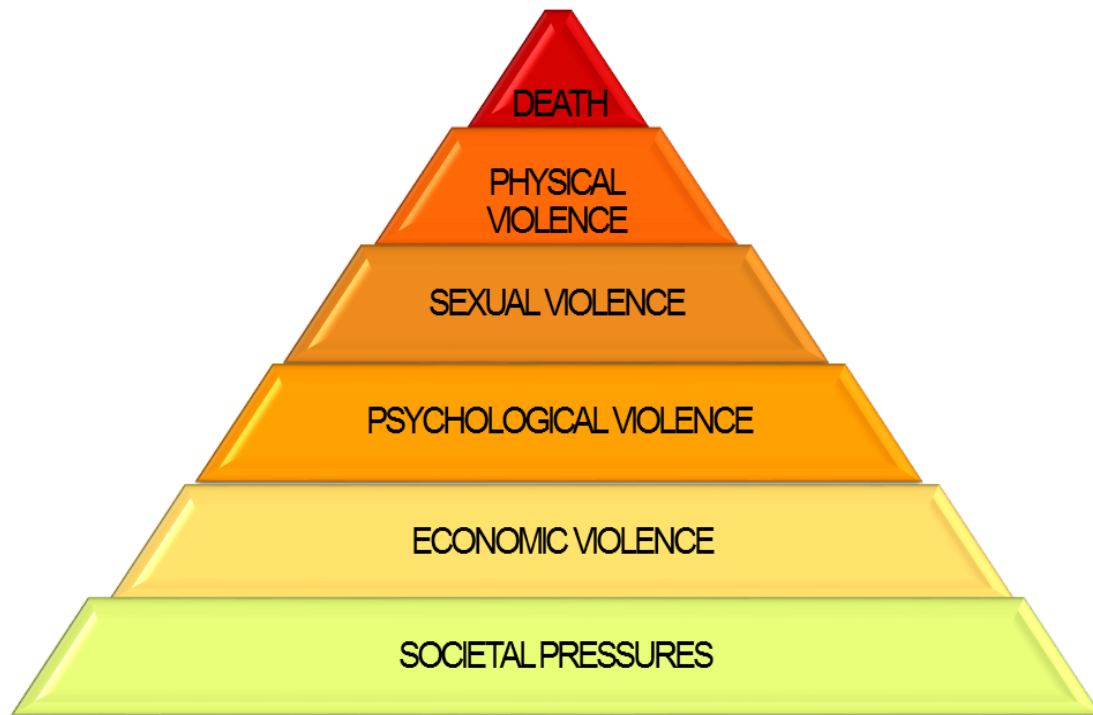
In the first phase – *tension build-up* – the man is generally not physically violent towards the woman but the communication between them is full on tension, entailing psychological violence, humiliation and intimidation. The woman may feel like walking on a knife’s edge – whatever she does or however she behaves, the partner is not satisfied. Therefore, the woman tries to be patient and minimise any problems. The man feels a mounting tension and inclines towards more controlling and domination, causing the victim to become increasingly detached.

In the second phase, *physical violence* or *explosion*, the man acts extremely violently. He is unwilling or unable to control his own negative emotions and experiences a short break in tension. The woman may have (severe) injuries, she is frightened and withdrawn.

In the third, *regret* or *honeymoon* phase, the man feels pangs of guilt and shame over his behaviour. He apologises to the woman, tries to be as kind and lovable as possible. He gives flowers to the woman, spends time with her, promises to change himself and not use violence again. Tension between the victim and the perpetrator decreases. The couple can even experience “new” love in that phase and have a hope that the relationship will improve. In positive moments, both the abuser and the victim may deny or distort the incident or its

details. The honeymoon phase is never comparable to the real honeymoon in a relationship. The aim of the phase is to prevent the woman from leaving and to keep her with the abuser. The woman may sincerely believe that the man will change his behaviour and that the violence will end. In that phase, the man may be the most open to outside help as he regrets the incident and wishes the relationship to continue.

## TYPES OF VIOLENCE



**Emotional violence** (also called psychological violence) is a verbal or nonverbal assault causing emotional harm to the other person and decreasing their sense of dignity. Emotional violence is continued wilful hurting of another person and their feelings. This type of violence is the most common and usually occurs in combination with physical, sexual and/or economic violence. Victims also consider emotional violence the most destructive and the hardest to bear. Emotional violence does not necessarily mean direct insults or shouting. It may also be expressed as fine and skilful manipulation and humiliation.

The following is a list of various manners of emotional violence:

- Criticising and belittling;
- Name-calling;
- Blaming;
- Humiliating;
- Scaring or threatening (incl. threatening to cause pain or kill);
- Systematic control (incl. control over movement, communication and use of money);
- Social isolation (e.g. restricting or forbidding communication with friends and relatives or time spent on recreation and hobbies due to egotistic need for power and control);
- Manipulating;
- Ignoring;
- Expressing jealousy.

**Physical violence** is wilful use of physical force against the other person's will, causing the other person injuries, physical pain or even death. Physical violence is the most easily recognisable type of violence because the victim has visible physical injuries. It includes the following actions:

- Pushing;
- Scratching;
- Grabbing, shaking;
- Throwing at item at the person;
- Kicking, hitting with hand or an item;
- Beating, incl. beating with an item;
- Pulling hair;
- Choking, suffocating;
- Biting;
- Poisoning;
- Burning;
- Holding; binding;
- Using a cut-and-thrust weapon or a firearm.

**Sexual violence** is any behaviour with sexual content, used to control, manipulate or humiliate another person. Sexual violence may be more common in relationships as it is currently thought. The reasons lie in the long-traditional patriarchal beliefs that being married or in a relationship means obligatory submission to the partner's sexual wishes. Sexual violence can be considered to occur if the following phenomena occur:

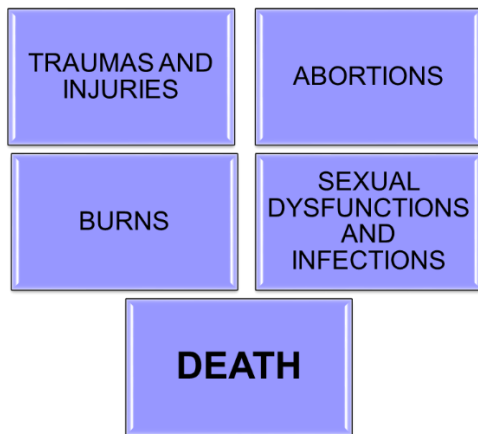
- Unwanted sexual touching (groping) and comments;
- Coerced intercourse with the partner;
- Intercourse with someone else, coerced by the partner;
- Causing pain in intimate body parts (sadism);
- Rape.

**Economic violence** means that the abuser controls the partner's use of money or material resources belonging to the partner. Economic violence hinders the partner's independent economic coping and may render the partner dependent on the abuser. The following actions can be considered economic violence:

- Taking away the partner's money;
- Keeping the partner's bank cards;
- Continually criticising purchases made by the partner;
- Restricting or hindering the partner's purchases or economic transactions;
- Creating a situation where the partner needs to beg for the money for one's necessary expenses;
- Not paying subsistence;
- Strict and formal controlling of household expenses (e.g. setting an obligation to present purchase slips and offsetting the costs);
- Hindering the partner's studies or work;
- Registering jointly acquired property to the abuser's own name;
- Forcing the victim to participate in illegal transactions, registering a company or illegally acquired property in the victim's name;
- Causing debts.

## CONSEQUENCES

Physical:



21

Psychological:



### Psychological trauma caused by violence

Psychological trauma is the consequence of insuperable, uncontrollable experiences which can happen to anyone and which often lead to experiencing helplessness, vulnerability and lack of control over one's own life.

### Acute trauma reactions

Acute trauma reactions are shock reactions which can last from a few hours to a few days. They may also be delayed for one to three days and last from some days to four to six weeks. Acute trauma reactions are normal reactions to a traumatic event. The following behaviour/symptoms can occur simultaneously.

### Observable behaviour/symptoms:

Agitation (motor anxiety; pacing up and down, inability to sit still, wringing hands, weeping, hostile attitude and behaviour). Conversion (loss of voice, vomiting, pain and ache, a lump in the throat, dizziness). Calmness, apathy and impassivity or stupor (immobility, seems not to notice her surroundings). Irrational behaviour (e.g. giggling, constant laughing). Rational behaviour accompanied by a total denial of the psychological impact of the violence (e.g. telling calmly about being raped).

### **Emotional/cognitive symptoms:**

anxiety, panic, confusion, numbness, disbelief (“This cannot be true”), memory gaps, impaired ability to think/function, distorted perception of time, loss of feelings (frozen fright), depression, feelings of worthlessness, guilt, shame, dissociation, depersonalisation, disorientation, out-of-body-experiences, hallucinatory experiences.

### **Long-term symptoms / PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder)**

Long-term symptoms are signs and changes in the individual behaviour, emotions, relationships, social life, personality characteristics, life situation and/or health condition.

Acute trauma reactions and long-term symptoms can be confounded (as seen e.g. in emergency medical wards).

PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder) is a medical diagnosis for long-term symptoms caused by repeated events that involve one’s threatened death, serious bodily injury or the threat to one’s physical integrity. Repeated attacks, physical proximity to the stressor (= perpetrator) and perceiving events as uncontrollable and unpredictable increase the risk of developing PTSD.

Other traumatic situations can also produce PTSD (e.g. being held hostage, tortured, raped, kidnapped, robbed).

PTSD can be especially severe or long-lasting when the stressor is a human being (instead of a natural catastrophe).

Extreme stress affects victims in many ways: somatic, emotional, cognitive, behavioural and attitudinal. It can lead to a variety of psychiatric disorders, such as dissociative disorders, eating disorders, substance abuse and self-destructive behaviour (Dutton 1995; van der Kolk *et al.* 1996). However, developing PTSD is a complex process:

Trauma reactions do not inevitably lead to mental disorder (disease model) but many women having experienced violence suffer severe symptoms known as PTSD.

PTSD is the result of a feeling of entrapment due to constant control by the perpetrator. It leads to the victim’s perception that changing the situation is impossible.

PTSD symptoms need to be seen as normal human responses to an insuperable experience on mind, body and society (interpersonal and institutional trauma).

Different coping strategies significantly reduce the consequences of trauma.

### **Emotional/cognitive symptoms:**

fearful behaviour/ongoing watchfulness/gasp reactions, lack of interest in things/depression, excessive dependence or isolation, hostility, irritability or outbursts of anger, rapid changes of mood/ambivalence, feeling of loneliness/being different/stigmatized, feeling permanently damaged (foreshortened future), anxiety/feeling trapped, loss of feelings/"frozen self", sleeping disturbances: trouble falling asleep or staying asleep, insomnia, nightmares, increased use of/dependence on drugs/alcohol, suicidal tendencies (thoughts/attempts/committed suicides).

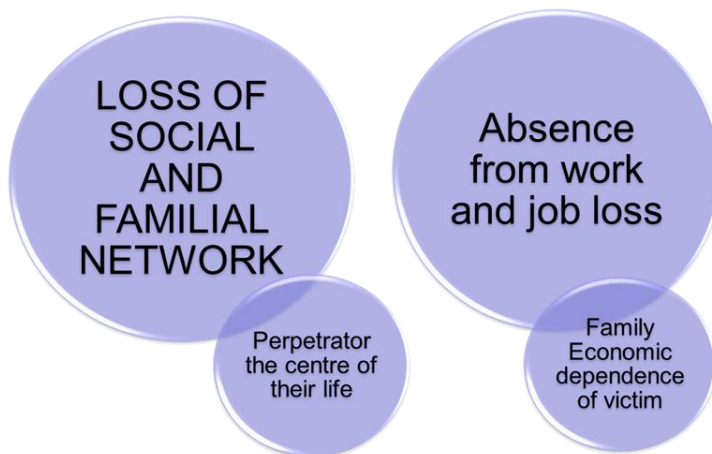
### **Behavioural symptoms:**

loss of relationships with relatives, friends, poor or no participation in social life/hobbies/always having to hurry home, numb/submissive behaviour, going back on decisions, forgetting appointments, withdrawal and isolation, avoiding situations/places/conversations associated with the trauma, difficulties concentrating on things (e.g. books, TV), poor parenting responses, child abuse.

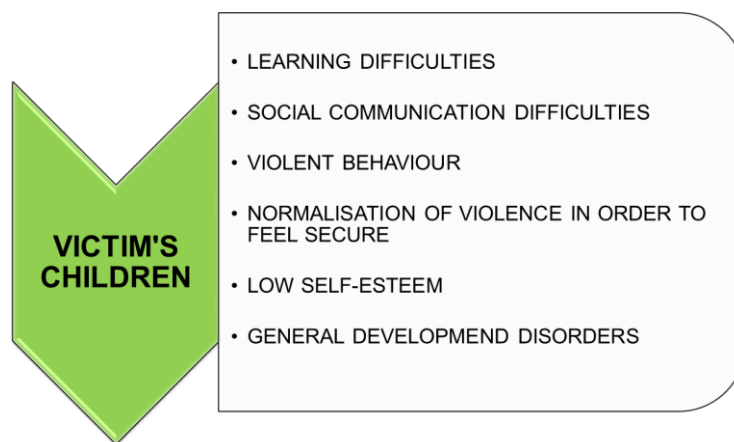
### **Somatic symptoms/illnesses:**

unexplained physical symptoms: pains, aches (e.g. headache), hypertension, stomach pain/gastric ulcer, colon irritable, menstrual disorders, pain in the chest/cardiac region/arrhythmia/infarct, difficulty in breathing/asthmatic symptoms/asthma, eating disorders, loss of appetite/weight, excessive eating/extreme obesity.

Social consequences:



The impact of trauma makes it very difficult for the victim to leave a violent partner. Gradually progressing assaults, mistreatment, intimidation and threats – which cause a traumatic bond – play an essential role. The central elements in the traumatic bond are the use of power and control and the cycle of violence.



## Impact of Violence on Children

A growing body of literature shows that children who have been exposed to domestic violence are more likely than their peers to experience a wide range of difficulties. These difficulties fall into three main categories:

- **Behavioural, social, and emotional problems.** Children in families experiencing domestic violence are more likely than other children to exhibit aggressive and antisocial behaviour or to be depressed and anxious. Other researchers have found higher levels of anger, hostility, oppositional behaviour, and disobedience; fear and withdrawal; poor peer, sibling, and social relationships; and low self-esteem.
- **Cognitive and attitudinal problems.** Children exposed to domestic violence are more likely to experience difficulties in school and score lower on assessments of verbal, motor, and cognitive skills. Slower cognitive development, lack of conflict resolution skills, limited problem solving skills, pro-violence attitudes, and belief in rigid gender stereotypes and male privilege are other issues identified in the research.
- **Long-term problems.** Research indicates that males exposed to domestic violence as children are more likely to engage in domestic violence as adults; similarly, females are more likely to be victims. Higher levels of adult depression and trauma symptoms also have been found. Exposure to domestic violence is also one of several adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) that have been shown to contribute to premature death, as well as risk factors for many of the most common causes of death.

Despite these sobering findings, not all children exposed to domestic violence will experience such negative effects. Children's risk levels and reactions to domestic violence exist on a continuum; some children demonstrate enormous resiliency, while others show signs of significant maladaptive adjustment. Protective factors such as social competence, intelligence, high self-esteem, outgoing temperament, strong sibling and peer relationships, and a supportive relationship with an adult (especially a non-abusive parent) can help protect children from the adverse effects of exposure to domestic violence.



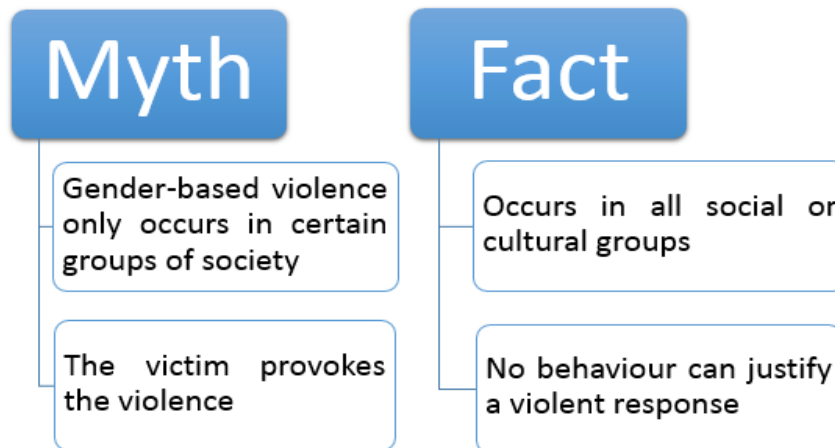
### **Additional factors that influence the impact of domestic violence on children include:**

- **Nature of the violence.** Children who witness frequent and severe forms of violence or fail to observe their caretakers resolving conflict may undergo more distress than children who witness fewer incidences of physical violence and experience positive interactions between their caregivers.
- **Age of the child.** Younger children appear to exhibit higher levels of emotional and psychological distress than older children. Age-related differences might result from older children's more fully developed cognitive abilities to understand the violence and select various coping strategies to alleviate upsetting symptoms.
- **Elapsed time since exposure.** Children often have heightened levels of anxiety and fear immediately after a violent event. Fewer observable effects are seen in children as time passes after the violent event.
- **Gender.** In general, boys exhibit more externalized behaviours (e.g., aggression and acting out) while girls exhibit more internalized behaviours (e.g., withdrawal and depression).
- **Presence of child physical or sexual abuse.** Children who witness domestic violence and are physically abused are at higher risk for emotional and psychological maladjustment than children who witness violence and are not abused.

Comprehensive assessment regarding children's experiences and trauma symptoms, as well as the protective factors present, should inform decision-making regarding the types of services and interventions needed for individual children and families living with violence.

## MYTHS AND FACTS

### MYTHS AND FACTS

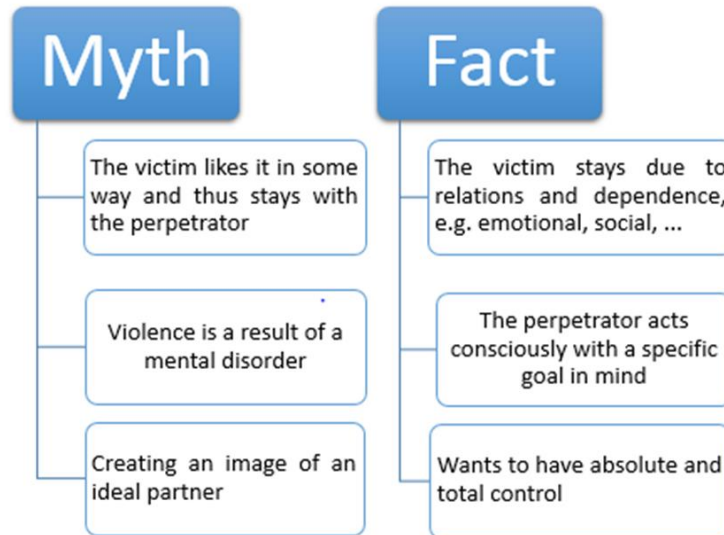


**The victim provoked the violence!** The victim (a woman, a child, an elderly family member) is often blamed for violence-provoking behaviour affecting the abuser so that the latter loses control.

**The victim deserved it!** This myth is based on the belief that the family member with more power can somehow assess the behaviour of other family members and punish them for “bad” behaviour. It is a commonly used myth to justify both wife beating and child abuse. For example, a man can justify hitting a woman by saying that the latter had behaved “wrongly”. A parent may also think that corporal punishment of a child is a parental duty. It is true that a parent must adequately respond to a child’s acts, but it must not be forgotten that disciplining a child must never humiliate the child or cause suffering or harm to him or her. Blaming the victim means justifying the violence because it places the responsibility on the one who suffers. No behaviour of the victim whatsoever can justify the use of violence.

**It is the family’s internal matter.** A family’s sense of privacy and the attitude of “my home is my castle” are perhaps the factors most severely hindering the disclosure of domestic violence. But the inviolability of the home and the family is valid only while not violating the trust placed in the family to support and care for the next of kin. Relationships within the family must correspond to the values, norms and customs common in the society. Otherwise it is a societal problem requiring intervention.

## MYTHS AND FACTS



**He's just that kind of violent man/person.** Violent behaviour is justified with the person's characteristics (e.g. a short-tempered nature) that cannot be changed in any way. In reality, there are ways to reduce violence.

**There is no domestic violence in orderly families.** "Nice people", "orderly people" are somehow out of question to have improper and violent family relationships. It is presumed that violence can occur only in families of poor, unemployed and alcohol-abusing people, the so-called asocial families. Due to this, signs of domestic violence may remain unnoticed. Yet the specialists of various domains encounter various people and one way to discover domestic violence is to ask everyone whether any of their next of kin (the partner, a parent, a child, etc.) is violent towards them. It gives a signal of willingness to help. A domestic violence victim may deny the occurrence of violence and may reply in the negative. The system still shows the victim that help is available.

**Domestic violence is a shame.** People often feel ashamed that an incident has happened in their community ("*a thing like that on our street*") or institution that casts a shadow on the good name of the community or institution. This way, the community or institution can have a controversial role in both disclosure of the domestic violence and supporting the participants. On the one hand, people live close together in a community, often have been for several generations, and it gives them a special feeling of supporting and helping each other, perhaps needing less outside assistance from social workers. Yet on the other hand, the same close connection can create a situation where people are unwilling to notice domestic violence occurring and may even try to hide the incidents because a disclosure is connected to great shame. The same reasoning also hinders victims and abusers from seeking help on their own. While caring for the community's honour and reputation, care must also be extended to the people who make up the community, reacting to signs indicating domestic violence.

**It happens in a family, it has always been so.** The community may get used to considering violent behaviour as something characteristic of someone. The fact that there has been

violence earlier between the same family's members does not automatically mean that it has to be tolerated today. Now we know about the harmful effect of domestic violence on family members, so we have to react. At the same time, both the perpetrator and the victim may be unable to understand that something is wrong, because they have seen the use of violence in family relationships as a child. This kind of perpetuation of violence can be stopped by intervening now, giving a clear signal to both the victim and the abuser that this is not an accepted way of behaving.

**Only a breakup can stop a violent relationship in a family.** Statistics show that a divorce does not stop the violence. The former spouse/cohabitee may continue using violence against the partner and the violence may even become more severe and more dangerous. It is only logical in the case of instrumental violence where the abuser sees the relationship as a way to exercise power.

## ADVICE TO INVESTIGATIVE AUTHORITIES

Different victimisation surveys show that only half of the domestic violence victims report their most recent incident of violence to the police. Only a slightly higher percentage (59 percent) had reported at least one of their previous victimisation episodes to the police.

The most common reasons for not reporting domestic violence to the police were fear of revenge or further violence from the perpetrator, feelings of shame or embarrassment or a belief that the incident was too trivial or unimportant.

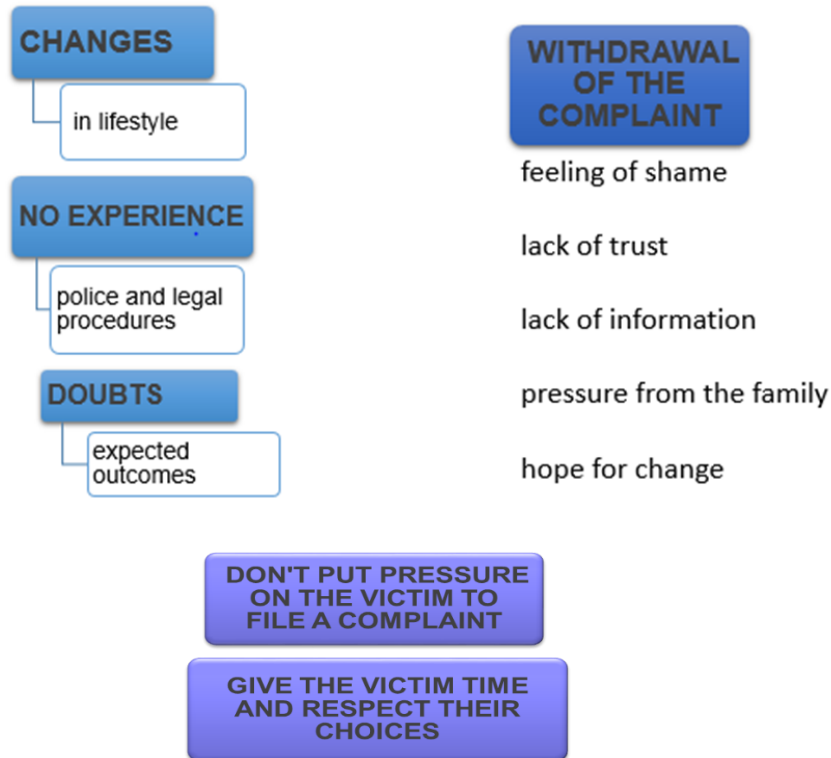
One in 10 victims state that they had not reported the most recent incident because they had previously had a bad or disappointing experience with the police, a little less had not reported the matter because they thought the police would be unwilling to do anything about the violence.

When victims who had not gone to the police were asked what, if anything, would have made it easier to have gone to the police, almost 1 in 5 say that the police being more understanding and proactive in their handling of all kind of domestic violence would have made it easier.

Although many victims had not reported their most recent incident of violence to the police, nearly 2/3 of respondents state that they are satisfied that they had not reported the violence. The three main reasons given by these victims for being satisfied with their decision not to report the violence were (1) it had meant no further violence from the perpetrator had been provoked, (2) they had been able to handle the situation themselves and did not have to deal with the embarrassment of police invading their privacy, and (3) they had avoided the additional stress associated with reporting to police.

Even though some victims appeared satisfied with not reporting the incident to police, nearly one in three victims say, in hindsight, they wished they had sought help from the police or another professional service sooner than they did and many wish they had left the relationship earlier.

## REPORTING IS NOT EASY



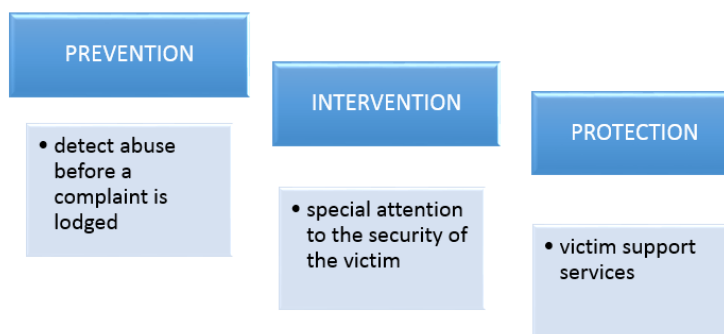
The interviewer must absolutely have enough patience, time and sense of empathy. The interview must take place in a calm place where no-one can disturb you. The interviewer must be ready to provide help – both immediately in a crisis situation and later, after the interview, to alleviate the trauma.

10 important principles for safe and ethical interviews:

- 1) Do not make things worse. Every moment of the conversation must be maximally safe for the person in need of help. The interview must not aggravate the situation.
- 2) Be competent when talking about the problem of trafficking in human beings and keep in mind the possible risks. When preparing for an interview, always keep in mind the possible risk factors of each specific case.
- 3) Prepare trustworthy and true information – do not make promises that you cannot keep. Be ready to explain the rights of the person in need and the social services that might help the person talk about his or her health and safety, and to give the information that he or she wishes to get, doing so in a language understandable to the person.

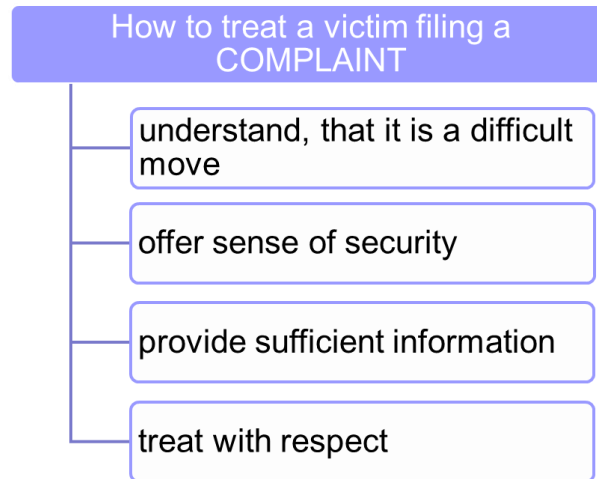
- 4) Be responsible and careful when choosing interpreters and other necessary people to work alongside you. You are the one responsible for the right choice and briefing of the people co-operating with you.
- 5) Respect the principles of anonymity and confidentiality. This starts with preparations for the interview and ends with publication of the material.
- 6) Obtain the consent of the person to be interviewed. Make sure the person agrees to co-operate with you, knows the purpose of the interview, knows his or her rights, including the right to refrain from answering certain questions, the right to interrupt the interview if necessary and the right to express his or her wishes concerning the use of the information provided by him or her.
- 7) Hear out the opinion of every interviewed person about his or her situation and risks, and honour that opinion. Keep in mind that the situation of every person in need is very individual. The view of each one of them about their situation may be largely different from that of others.
- 8) Do not cause additional trauma to the person being interviewed. Do not ask questions that may lead to emotional and psychological discomfort. Be willing to account for the victim's state of stress.
- 9) Be ready to act in a danger situation. Be willing to employ decisive measures if the victim tells you about actual threats or actual risk to his or her life.
- 10) Use the received information for the sole purpose of solving the specific situation/case. Use the information to the benefit of the victim; forward the information to only those who can help the victim.

## POLICE

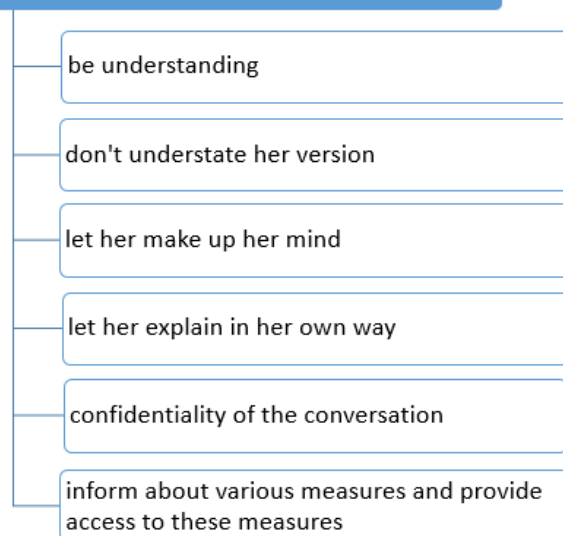


## VICTIM-FRIENDLY INVESTIGATION

How to treat a victim coming to the police to report an offence against him or her?



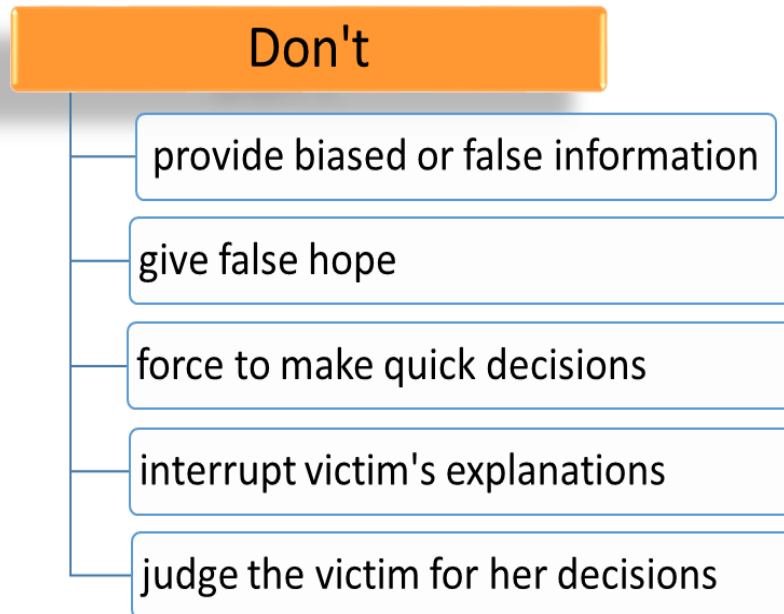
### Right conduct with the victim



- Take the victim seriously.
- Use a safe environment for the conversation. (Remember – if the victim is accompanied by his or her partner, the environment is not safe to talk.)
- Pay attention to the victim's immediate need for safety, regardless of whether the victim stays or leaves immediately.
- Explain to the victim that the violence is not his or her fault.
- Explain to the victim that there are others who have suffered from domestic violence.
- Introduce the victim to places and people who work to help people like him or her.
- Keep in mind that the victim's opportunities may be limited due to lack of resources.

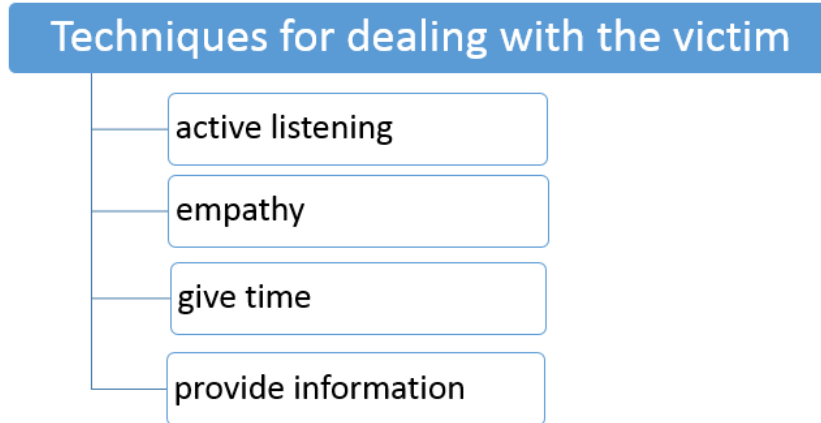


- Keep in mind that confidentiality is very important.
- Ask whether it is safe to send letters or make calls to the victim at his or her home.
- Prepare proper documentation.
- Keep in mind that different victims have different needs and find a suitable solution based on their individual needs.

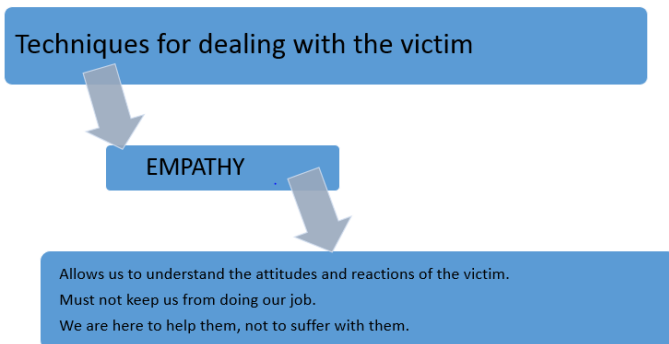


- DON'T ignore your intuition if you get a suspicion that violence has been used against a woman.
- DON'T recommend a joint conversation with the woman and her partner.
- DON'T ask her if she has done anything to provoke the violence; just address the facts. Such questions put the victim into the role of the guilty party and the abuser.
- DON'T decide for her.
- DON'T expect her to leave her home or partner.
- DON'T expect her to make quick decision about her life.
- DON'T lose hope if things take more time than you thought they should. Addressing domestic violence is a process with multiple stages, and multiple attempts may be necessary to address it. A relationship is not a static thing and both the victim and the abuser change over time.
- DON'T pressure her into disclosure or an open talk. It is always her own choice.
- DON'T forward information about her to anyone without her consent.

## Techniques for dealing with the victim



Hear the victim out, show empathy, give time to talk about what has happened, and provide information about what will be done and why. Never give unfounded promises to a victim.



## Techniques for dealing with the victim

### GIVE THE VICTIM TIME

Show her, that we understand her earlier and current attitudes towards the perpetrator.  
Give her time to express emotions.  
Pay special attention to body language.

## Techniques for dealing with the victim

### PROVIDE INFORMATION

Give information when the time is right.  
Wait until the anxiety subsides and the victim is able to give concrete information.  
Provide sufficient information concerning the victim's rights and possible measures.

## Advice on questioning the victim

### Questioning the victim

explain why all these questions are necessary

use suitable rooms

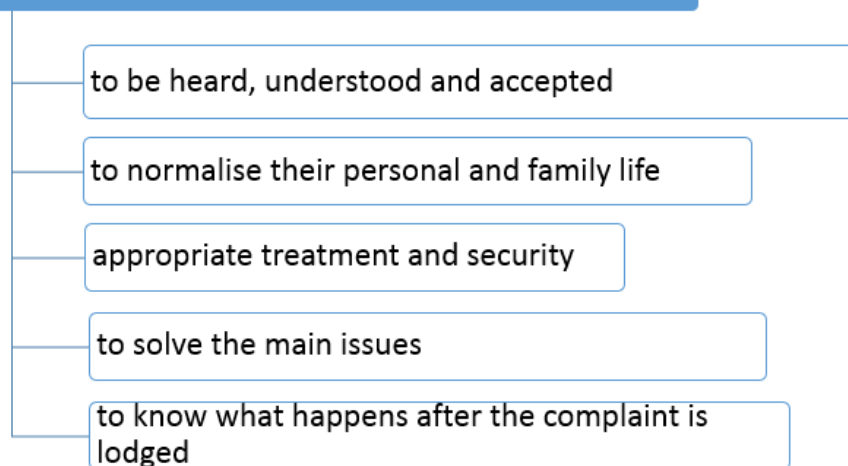
create an atmosphere of trust

Upon questioning the victim, always explain why you are asking questions that may be uncomfortable for the victim. Use a room where the victim feels safe and where nobody can enter the room at an inconvenient time, interrupting the questioning. It is important for the victim that he or she is believed, therefore an atmosphere of trust must be established.

## How to create an atmosphere of trust

DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Introduce</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My name is ... and I represent the ....</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Appreciate</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We understand how difficult it is for you to turn to us ...</li> <li>• Coming to the police is a huge step ...</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Show experience</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have experience in these kinds of situations ...</li> <li>• We will do anything we can to help you ...</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <b>Blame</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why did you go back to him ...</li> <li>• What did you do so that he hit you ...</li> </ul> </li> <li>❖ <b>Disapprove</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You should have come earlier ...</li> <li>• If you withdraw your complaint, there is nothing that we can do ...</li> </ul> </li> <li>❖ <b>Belittle</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is not important ...</li> <li>• This is not anything you should ...</li> </ul> </li> <li>❖ <b>Give false hopes</b></li> <li>❖ <b>Give advice</b></li> </ul>

## Needs of the VICTIM



### Advice to police officers

Police behaviour in intervention	
DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ask and listen</li> <li>• ask for opinion and help to talk about what happened</li> <li>• be respectful</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ influence</li> <li>❖ judge</li> <li>❖ label</li> <li>❖ presume</li> </ul>

## The POLICE should consider

- that abuse is usually chronic
- that a complaint is lodged if the victim and the children are at a great threat
- the importance of PREVENTION
- coordination with other relevant services

37

## Difficulties of POLICE WORK

- fear of not knowing how to handle the situation
- concern about being recognised in a group of abusers (male police officer)
- concern about assessing the actual threat

## POLICE communication

- speak in a way the victim can understand
- communicate information in a clear manner
- pay attention to body language

## POLICE protection measures

- adjusted to the victim's needs
- the victim has been informed and she has given her consent
- cause as little harm as possible to the victim's daily life

## Supervision of legal protection measures

checking the degree of compliance

assessing of the actual threat for victim at any moment

preparing activity reports

38

## Criteria for preparing ACTIVITY REPORT

assessing concrete threat (VIOGEN)

analysing the content of the court judgement

taking protection measures according to the threat

preparing follow-up reports

dealing with the perpetrator in case of violation of measures

## VIOGEN

Police assessment of risk

Police assessment of risk changes

### Risk levels:

- not identified - 90 days
- low - 60 days
- medium - 30 days
- high - 7 days
- very high - 72 hours

## SOCIAL protection measures

providing access to existing means

### Means:

- free legal aid
- social welfare
- work related rights
- right to economic aid
- access to social housing
- providing formal education to children a priority
- legalizing the status of victims who are illegal immigrants
- electronic and data communication equipment

## STATISTICAL data

importance of focusing activities

knowing the type of victim/perpetrator

### Important information:

- age
- nationality
- addictions
- family history
- type of relationship

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