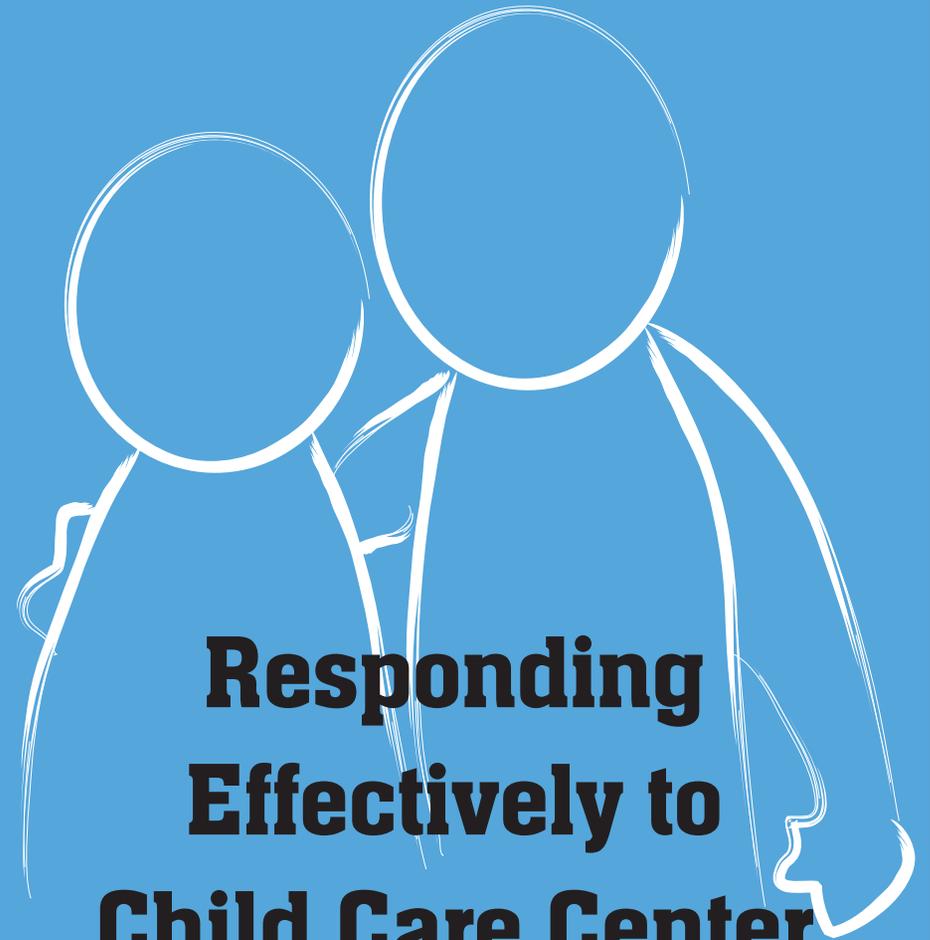




Early Childhood Connections
Cambridge Community Partnerships
for Children

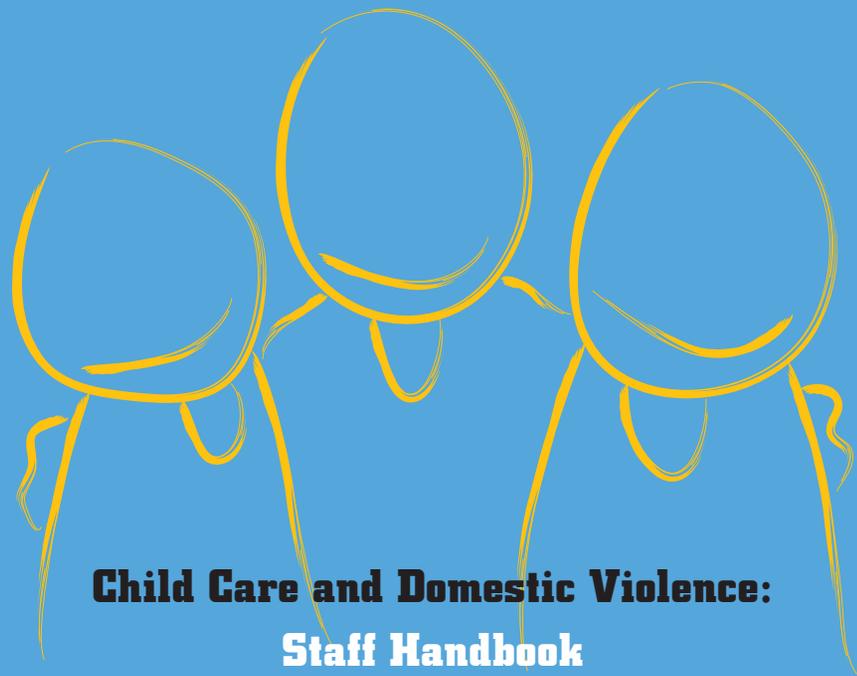
(617) 349-6485



**Responding
Effectively to
Child Care Center
Employees Facing
Domestic Violence**

HANDBOOK

FOR CHILD CARE TEACHERS AND DIRECTORS



**Child Care and Domestic Violence:
Staff Handbook**

*Thanks to Early Childhood Connections,
a project of the
Cambridge Community Partnerships for Children
and the
Cambridge Public Health Department for their
support for this handbook.*

*Special thanks to graphic designer
Torey Whitfield,
Rindge School of Technical Arts,
and
The Cambridge Rindge and Latin School*

*This handbook is available for
download on the
Cambridge Public Health Department website:
[http://www.cambridgepublichealth.org/
publications.php](http://www.cambridgepublichealth.org/publications.php)*

An employee reveals to her Director that a co-worker was recently threatened by her husband. He said he was planning to come to their job site and shoot her.

An employee arrives at work with her face badly bruised and swollen from a fight with her boyfriend the night before.

These are actual scenarios that have been reported by employees of child care centers in Cambridge. The problem of domestic violence is widespread, and there are child care center staff that have been victims of domestic violence. The aim of this guide is to provide suggestions on how to handle situations that may arise in which child care center staff are victims of violence. If you have further questions about how to respond effectively, contact your designated Domestic Violence Resource Person (DVRP). For a complete list, see the end of this guide.

DEFINITION

Adult domestic violence, also referred to as intimate partner violence, is the establishment of control (intimidation) and fear in a relationship through the use of violence and other forms of abuse. The abusive partner may use physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, economic abuse, economic oppression, isolation, threats, intimidation and maltreatment of children to control the victim. Domestic violence occurs among people from all ethnic, racial and religious groups and occupational and educational levels. While statistics note that 95% of incidents of partner violence are attributed to men harming women, women can also be the aggressors, and violence also occurs among same sex couples. **If you are in an abusive relationship, see page 7.**

Effects Of Domestic Violence

Domestic violence results in bodily injury, emotional suffering, stress-related illness, depression, eating disorders, alcohol & drug abuse, and employee absenteeism. In fact, domestic violence does not just occur in the home, but may end up in a work setting through incidents of stalking, harassing phone calls and assaults. The Family Violence Prevention Fund has created a fact sheet about Domestic Violence and the Workplace (www.endabuse.org)

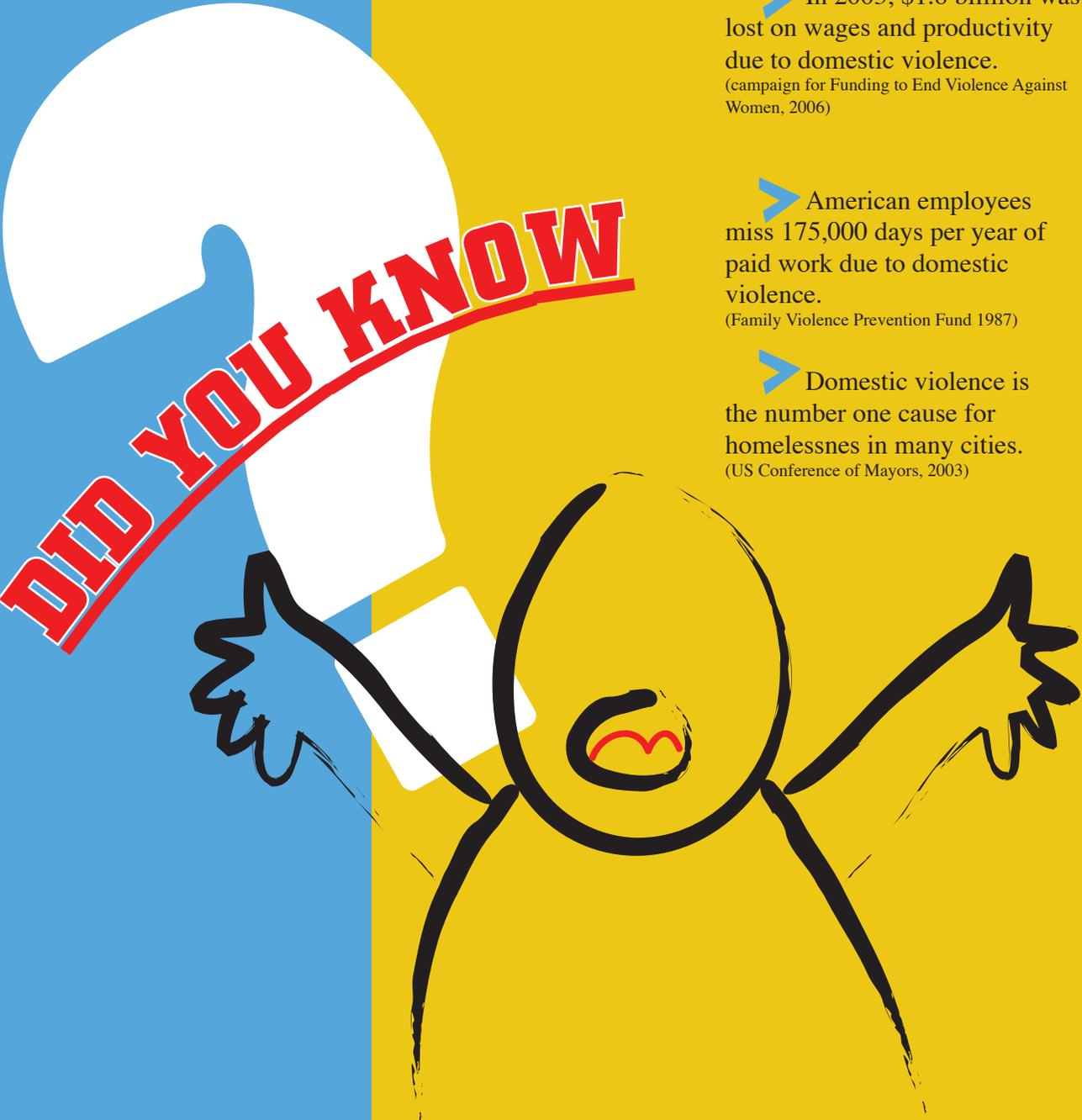
> Nearly one in three women in the U.S. report that they have been sexually or physically abused by a husband or boyfriend at some point during their lives.
(Commonwealth Fund Survey, 1998)

> A study of domestic violence survivors found that 74% of employed battered women were harassed by their partner while they were at work.
(Family Violence Prevention Fund, 1998)

> In 2003, more than 40,000 restraining orders were issued in Massachusetts.
(Jane Doe Inc., 2003)

> 8.8 million children a year witness domestic violence
(Campaign to End Violence Against Women, 2006)

> Of the 4 million workplace crime incidents committed against females from 1993 through 1999, only 40 percent were reported to the police.
(Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2004)



DID YOU KNOW

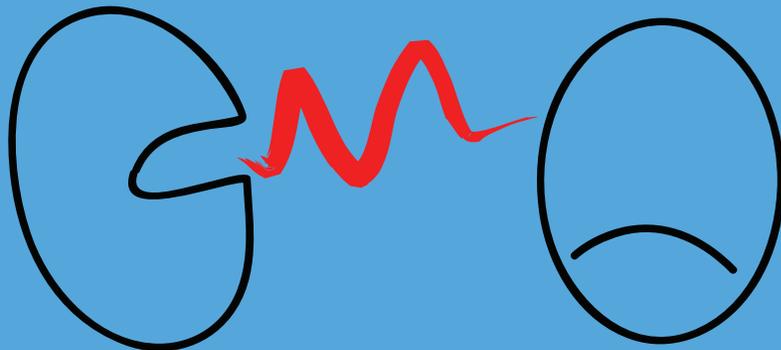
> In 2005, \$1.8 billion was lost on wages and productivity due to domestic violence.
(campaign for Funding to End Violence Against Women, 2006)

> American employees miss 175,000 days per year of paid work due to domestic violence.
(Family Violence Prevention Fund 1987)

> Domestic violence is the number one cause for homelessness in many cities.
(US Conference of Mayors, 2003)

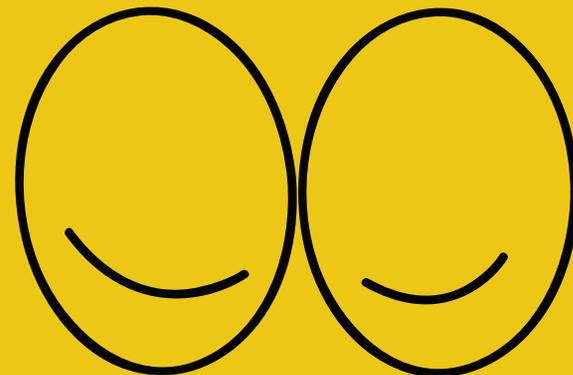
Dynamics of Domestic Violence

<p>USING COERCION & THREATS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making and/or carrying out threats to do something to hurt her, threatening to leave her or commit suicide, to report her to welfare, making her drop charges, involving her in illegal activities. 	<p>USING EMOTIONAL ABUSE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Putting her down or making her feel bad about herself, calling her names, making her think she's crazy, humiliating her & making her feel guilty. 	<p>USING ISOLATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Controlling what she does, who she sees & talks to, what she reads, where she goes, limiting her outside involvement, using jealousy to justify actions.
<p>USING INTIMIDATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making her afraid by using looks, actions, gestures, loud voice, destroying her property, abusing pets, displaying weapons. 	<p>USING CHILDREN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making her feel guilty about the children, using the children to give messages, using visitation to harass her, threatening to take the children away. 	<p>MINIMIZING, DENYING & BLAMING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making light of the abuse and not taking her concerns seriously, saying the abuse didn't happen, shifting responsibility for abuse behavior, saying she caused abuse.
<p>SEXUAL ABUSE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forcing to do sexual acts against her will, physically attacking the sexual parts of her body, treating her like a sex object. 	<p>USING MALE PRIVILEGE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treating her like a servant, making all the "big" decisions, acting like the master of the household, being the one to define men's & women's roles. 	<p>USING ECONOMIC ABUSE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preventing her from getting or keeping a job, making her ask for money, giving her an allowance, taking her money, not letting her know about or have access to family income.



Dynamics of a Healthy Relationship

<p>ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making economic decisions together. • Making sure both partners benefit from financial arrangements 	<p>NEGOTIATION & FAIRNESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking mutually satisfying resolutions to conflict. • Accepting change. • Being willing to compromise. 	<p>NON-THREATENING BEHAVIOR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking and acting so that each partner feels safe and comfortable, expressing themselves and doing things.
<p>RESPECT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening to one another non-judgmentally. • Being emotionally affirming and understanding. • Valuing each other's opinions. 	<p>TRUST & SUPPORT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting each partner's goals in life. • Respecting the right of each partner to have their own feelings, friends, activities, and opinions. 	<p>HONESTY & ACCOUNTABILITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accepting responsibility for self. • Acknowledging past use of violence. • Admitting being wrong. • Communicating openly and truthfully.
<p>RESPONSIBLE PARENTING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being a positive non-violent role model for the children. • Sharing responsibilities. 	<p>SHARED RESPONSIBILITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mutually agreeing on a fair distribution of work. • Making family decisions together. 	



If You Find Yourself In An Abusive Relationship

DIRECTORS:

Contact a Domestic Violence Resource Person (DVRP) or Fran Roznowski, Early Childhood Connections, at (617) 349-6485.

CHILD CARE STAFF WHO ARE EXPERIENCING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

If you are experiencing domestic violence, planning in advance for your own safety and for that of your own children in the event of an emergency is very important. It can prevent serious injury and may save lives. It is also important to think about the safety of both the children in your care and your co-workers if you think that a violent partner might be likely to stalk you or cause harm to you, children or staff at the child care center.

TEACHERS:

Notify your Director or Domestic Violence Resource Person of the abusive situation and the possible need to be absent to seek medical help, legal assistance or shelter.

REMEMBER:

- If it's difficult to be in the classroom, please talk to your director to arrange for an alternate work plan.
 - When seeking a restraining order, ask that your abuser stay away from your work address as well as your home address.
- (Carry the restraining order with you at all times in**

case the police have to be called. Do not let it expire!)

- Submit a recent picture of the abuser to the director so that a possible identification can be made if the abuser appears at your job.
- Consider seeking the services and/or support of a domestic violence resource agency (see page 18).

If You Believe A Staff Member Or Co-worker Is A Victim Of Violence

- Notify the Director or your Domestic Violence Resource Person (DVRP).
- Be aware of physical indicators (signs of bruises to face, arms, etc.) and signs of emotional or psychological abuse (increased isolation, changes in personality, fearfulness, etc.).
- Be aware of unusual absences or changes in staff behavior related to job performance.
- Assess the center's flexibility with respect to sick time, personal time, or out-of-classroom job assignments for staff who are victims of domestic violence.
- Maintain confidentiality at all times.
- Be familiar with local domestic violence resources
- Observe all civil protection orders (restraining orders, no contact judgments).
- Know the components of a safety plan.
- Let the employee use the center phone to contact domestic violence resources/shelter.
- If needed, let the employee use the center to receive mail (or through the Address Confidentiality Program see page 22)

- Offer to sit with them while they speak to the Domestic Violence Resource Person or battered women's support services.
- Be sensitive to the seriousness of the situation.

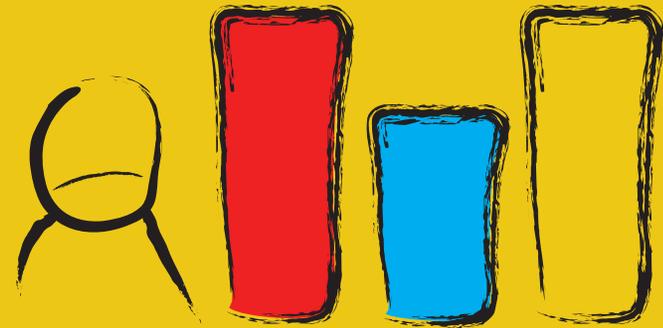
How To Approach A Staff Member Or Colleague Who Is A Victim Of Abuse

Many of us working as directors or teachers at child care centers may not feel comfortable questioning a co-worker about partner violence even if we notice overt signs. Here are several questions to try to ask:

- Tell me about your relationship.
- Are you safe at home?
- Is someone hurting you?
- Are you ever fearful of your partner? Are your children ever afraid of him/her?
- Does your partner act jealous or possessive?
- Has your partner ever threatened you or your children?
- Do you have friends or family you can talk to go to for support outside of your relationship?
- Would you like to talk to someone about what's happening to you and your options?
- Do you know there are 24 hour hotlines and people you can talk to for options?

If the staff member does not disclose domestic violence, the Director should be reassuring of the confidentiality of the situation, make known her/his availability to discuss any future issues, recommend resources, and discuss how to respond to children's inquiries about visible injuries.

Barriers to Leaving/ and Accessing Help



Often people will wonder why a person in an abusive situation does not just leave or at least reach out for help. It is not as easy to do this as you might think. Here's why...

- fear of retaliation (the abuser has made threats to harm/kill her or the children if she leaves or seeks help).
- fear that no one will believe her.
- the victim believes that the abuse is her own fault.
- she and her children have no where else to go.
- she does not know about available support services or how to access them.
- she is afraid to go to a shelter.
- the abuser promises to get help/to change.
- she has concern for what will happen to the abuser if she calls the police, gets a restraining order, or seeks services
- the victim and the abuser have children together and she does not want her children to grow up without a father.
- the abuser has threatened to kidnap or take custody of the children if she leaves.
- the stigma of disclosing domestic violence.

How To Help

- Communicate your concern about the staff member's well-being, the safety of her own children, and the well-being of other staff and children at the center.
- Acknowledge and validate the presence of the violence that has contributed to her/his concerns: physical signs of violence, disruptions at the center, chronic lateness or deteriorating work performance.
- If the staff member has acknowledged domestic violence, the Director should encourage the staff member to seek assistance and provide resource numbers and time to contact them.
- The Director should discuss whether it is safe and appropriate for the person to continue with classroom responsibilities, or whether an alternate location or role is more suitable given her situation. The Director should clearly establish that reassignment/relocation is in no way punitive; the Director would respond in the same fashion if the staff member came to work with a different kind of family emergency or crisis.

➤ The role of a Director is to listen with empathy to a victim of domestic violence and provide referrals to domestic violence programs. The Director also is responsible for assessing the impact of situations of domestic violence on the both employee and on the workplace in general. This includes protecting the safety of children and staff. After the employee has self-disclosed, the employee and the Director can work together to develop a safety plan.

What Not To Ask

- Do not ask the staff person if she is a “battered woman”. She will very likely deny this label because of the shamefulness and worthlessness associated with it. No one wants to be labeled.
- Do not ask her if she is being abused. People have many different definitions of what constitutes abuse. Most people will answer no to this question even if they are being physically assaulted.
- Do not ask the woman why the violence occurred or what caused it. This presumes that she or her actions caused the violence and that she is therefore, at fault.
- Do not ask the woman why she has not left her partner or why she keeps returning. There are many barriers to leaving an abusive relationship. Many victims leave multiple times before permanently ending the relationship.

Components Of A Safety Plan

Safety planning must be done in collaboration with the person who is being abused. She will know better than anyone else what actions will help keep her safe and what might make this situation more dangerous. For example, obtaining a restraining order may enrage the batterer and actually raise the risk in the situation rather than lessen it.

REMEMBER: LEAVING AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP IS THE MOST DANGEROUS TIME!

- Provide a copy of the Cambridge City Safety Planning brochure to all staff members and remind them that the director or the Domestic Violence Resource Person can assist with any workplace issues.
- Encourage the staff person to review her safety planning procedure with the Cambridge Police Department's Domestic Violence Liaison at (617) 349-3371.
- Have a current address & phone number of the employee.
- Have two emergency contacts for the staff person.
- Review the safety of the staff person's own children, if applicable.
- Review the employee's parking arrangement (in case stalking is involved).
- Have a copy of the restraining order on file (if there is one). Make sure it has not expired. (temporary orders must be made 'permanent' within 10 days of issuance).
- Have a photo of the abuser with the restraining order on file.
- For the safety of everyone at the child care center, determine whether weapons are involved (especially if there is a restraining order in place).
- Be prepared to call the police if the abuser appears. Have a second person as a designated resource person.

Workplace Safety Plan

- Save any threatening emails or voicemail messages. You can use these to take legal action in the future, if you choose to. If you already have a restraining order, the messages can serve as evidence in court that the order was violated.

- Park close to the entrance of your building, and talk with security, the police, or a manager if you fear an assault at work.
- Ask Security to escort you to and from your car or public transportation.
- Have your calls screened, transfer harassing calls to security, or remove your name and number from automated phone directories.
- Relocate your workspace to a more secure area.
- Look into alternate hours or work locations.
- If you obtain a restraining order, make sure that it is current and on hand at all times. Include the workplace on the order. A copy should be provided to the police, the employee's supervisor, Human Resources, the reception area, the Legal department, and Security.
- Provide a picture of the perpetrator to reception areas and/or Security.
- Identify an emergency contact person should the employer be unable to contact you.
- Review the safety of your child care arrangements, whether it is on-site childcare at the center or off-site elsewhere.

Remember, you cannot stop your partner's abuse, but you can find help and support for yourself. No one deserves to be abused.

From the

Family Violence Prevention Fund website:
http://endabuse.org/resources/gethelp/workplace_plan.php3

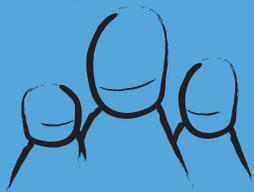
Approaches With Children In Your Care

In creating a plan for responding to domestic violence, staff of child care programs must be prepared for the possibility that the children in your care will notice signs of abuse in staff. There are several possible approaches:

A teacher with an apparent injury could respond with open-ended questions with the intent of drawing attention away from the source of the injury, such as:

“Have you ever seen a black eye like this?”
“What could have happened?”

The teacher can focus the attention on how first aid was administered and how other people helped out. An extension of the children’s expressed interest in the teacher’s injuries can be to set out props to encourage dramatic play about an emergency room or first aid. The dramatic play areas such as the block corner or house corner can be transformed into a clinic, or an ambulance. In the interest of children’s sense of security and safety, it is recommended that a teacher should not offer information as to how she was hurt but rather to emphasize the first aid. Children may lose a sense of stability and security typically associated with a child care setting if they realize that grown-ups are unable to keep themselves safe from violence.



It is recommended that the staff person...

- Meet with the Director to explore how to best handle children’s questions about the teacher’s injuries or absence. The Early Childhood Specialist for Stress and Violence Intervention, Fran Roznowski, can provide assistance (617-349-6485).
- Discuss the approach with the teaching team to assure that all of the teachers will respond in the same way with the children.

Intervention by caring co-workers and finding support for the staff person in crisis can be a turning point in the life of a victim. Remember, no one deserves to be hurt.

You can make a difference.

How To Respond To Incidents Of Violence On Site

The following are suggestion for how to deal with a violent or abusive adult who comes to the child care center. (Some of these suggestions may need to be adapted to meet the needs of a particular site).

If there is a violent or abusive adult in center:

- Be alert.
- Speak in a calm voice.
- If at all possible, direct the violent adult away from the children.
- Attempt to de-escalate the situation. If the adult doesn’t

respond, direct the adult to leave the center. Inform the adult that you are going to call the police.

- Notify the director and police (call 911).
- Have one teacher stay with the children and move them to a safe area.
- Reassure the children you are doing what you can to keep them safe. Listen to what children have to say.

**Staff may also want to create a code word or phrase that everyone will know and will indicate that there is an emergency and that the Director and the police should be called.

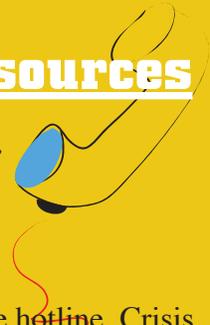
After the incident:

- Contact the center's Domestic Violence Resource Person (DVRP)
- Determine the appropriate way to notify parents if children witnessed the incident.
- Provide art and movement activities as follow-up for children to express their feelings and thoughts. Affirm their feelings and practice safe ways to express anger and frustration.
- Provide staff with an opportunity to express their reactions to the incident. Have the staff evaluate their performance in response to the incident. Make recommendations for similar situations in the future.

The Domestic Violence Liaison of the Cambridge Police Dept. (617-349-3371) and the Citywide Violence Prevention Coordinator (617-665-3816) are available to work with child care centers to develop safety plans.

Domestic Violence Resources

SERVICES FOR VICTIMS



SAFELINK, Statewide

- 877/785-2020, 877/521-2601 (TTY)

Toll-free, statewide 24-hour domestic violence hotline. Crisis intervention, safety planning, support, information and referrals. Access to emergency shelter statewide. A 24-hour live response in English, Spanish, and TTY and translation in 140 languages.

Transition House, Cambridge

- 617/661-7203

Shelter for up to 12 weeks; assistance with transitional housing Legal assistance, counseling, advocacy, support for children

- Services in English, Spanish, Haitian-Kreyol, French, Hebrew, and Arabic.

RESPOND, Somerville

- 617/623-5900

Limited shelter; assistance with transitional housing legal assistance, counseling, advocacy, support for children

- Services in English, French, Spanish, Haitian-Kreyol, Portuguese.

Casa Myrna Vasquez, Boston

- 800/992-2600

Shelter for up to 12 weeks; assistance with transitional housing legal assistance, counseling, advocacy, support for children. Specialize in providing service for non-English

speaking women and immigrants.

- Services in English, Spanish Haitian-Kreyol, Portuguese and access to translation line.

Asian Task Force Against Domestic Violence, Boston

617/338-2355

Provide culture-specific assistance to women in crisis and their families

- Services available in Chinese, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Japanese, Korean.

Boston Area Rape Crisis Center, Cambridge

617/492-RAPE (7273); 800/841-8371;

800/223-5001(Español)

Provides confidential 24-hour services to rape survivors and/or their families. Services are free, culturally sensitive, age-appropriate and include medical and legal advocacy, counseling, and referrals.

- Services in English, Spanish Haitian-Kreyol, French.

National Domestic Violence Hotline

800/799-SAFE (7233); 800/787-3224 (TTY)

140 languages available. Can assist survivors in locating a shelter and/or other services in their area.

The Network/La Red, statewide

617/423-SAFE

Ending Abuse for Battered Lesbians, Bisexual Women, Transgender and Transexual Communities.

- Services in English, Spanish. Safe homes available for short term safety.

Gay Men's Domestic Violence Project, statewide

- 800/832-1901

Safe homes available for short term safety

- Services in English and Spanish

Massachusetts Alliance of Portuguese Speakers (MAPS)

- 617/629-6065, x13

Advocacy, information, referrals, case management and counseling for victims and batterer intervention services for perpetrators of domestic violence.

- Services in English, Brazilian, Cape Verdean and Portuguese.

SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

Children with Voices

617/354-2275

Child witness to domestic violence treatment program at the Cambridge Youth Guidance Center/ Somerville Family Center. Individual, family and group counseling in English and Spanish.

Child Witness to Violence Program, Boston Medical Center

617/414-4244

Counseling, advocacy and outreach for children who witness violence in English and Spanish.

Dating Violence Intervention Project

617/868-1657

A program of Transition House which provides individual and

group counseling for victims and perpetrators of teen dating violence as well as preventive education in Cambridge schools in English and Spanish.

COURTS AND LEGAL ASSISTANCE

Middlesex County District Attorney's Office, Victim/Witness Bureau

617/679-6528

Assistance with restraining orders and domestic violence criminal cases in English, Portuguese, Spanish, Ukrainian, Mandarin, Khemer, and access to 135 languages on phone service.

Cambridge District Court, Victim/Witness Advocate

617/679-6500

- Interpreters available

Somerville District Court, Victim/Witness Advocate

617/625-2520

- Interpreters available

Middlesex Probate Court

617/768-5800, x6

For issues of family law (divorce, child custody and visitation), and restraining orders.

- Interpreters available

Greater Boston Legal Services (GBLS)

617/371-1234

Asian Outreach Unit - The Asian Outreach Unit offers legal services to Asians in GBLS' service area in all areas of law GBLS handles.

- Cantonese, Mandarin, Toisanese and Vietnamese interpreters are available.

Cambridge and Somerville Legal Services

617/603-2700

Low cost legal assistance and advice; specializes in domestic violence cases.

- Services in English, Spanish, Haitian-Kreyol, Portuguese.

Community Legal Services and Counseling Center

617/661-1010

Low cost legal assistance and advice, specializes in domestic violence.

- Interpreters available for legal services, English only for counseling.

Address Confidentiality Program

- 1-866-SAFE-ADD

A program through the Office of the Secretary of State which enables victims of violence who are fleeing or are in hiding to keep their new address confidential.

- Interpreters available

Criminal History Systems Board, Victim Services Unit

617/660-4690

The unit certifies victims of violence, witnesses, and family members of homicide victims to be notified in advance when an offender is going to be released from prison. Resources, referrals, crisis intervention, and safety planning assistance are also provided as needed.

- Interpreters available

BATTERERS’ INTERVENTION PROGRAMS

EMERGE

617/547-9879

Groups for perpetrators of domestic violence.

Services in Cambodian, English, Spanish, Vietnamese

Cultural Group(s): African American, lesbians, gay men, and adolescent perpetrators.

Common Purpose, Inc.

617/522-6500

Certified Batterer Intervention groups for perpetrators of domestic violence.

- Services in English, Haitian-Kreyol, and Spanish.

OTHER SERVICES

Dept. of Social Services, Domestic Violence Unit

617/748-2335

Dept. of Social Services, Child-at-Risk Hotline

800/792-5200

Parental Stress Hotline

800/632-8188

Elder Protective Services

Elder Abuse Hotline

800/922-2275

Disabled Persons Protection

800/426-9009

Commission Abuse Hotline

Cambridge Hospital

617-591-6360

Victims of Violence Program

Cambridge Health Alliance

617-591-6360

A specialized program for individuals who have suffered an acute or chronic trauma. The services include evaluation and individual and group treatment, advocacy, outreach, and consultation.

- Interpreters available



Early Childhood Domestic Violence Resource People

Fran Roznowski Early Childhood Connections Cambridge Community Partnerships for Children	617-349-6485
Alemishet Kidane Oxford St. Day Care	617-547-3175
Michelle Taylor Oxford St. Day Care	617-547-3175
Katy Donovan Peabody Terrace Children's Center	617-868-5573
Cindy Green North Cambridge Children's Center	617-876-0503
Judi Zalles Alef-Bet Child Care Center	617-547-3651
Just Holm Cambridge Dept. of Human Services Programs	617-349-6211
Elba Rodriquez Catholic Charities Family Day Care	617-623-8555 x111
Ginger Engels Catholic Charities Family Day Care	617-623-8555 x109
Jeannie Parkus Special Start, Cambridge School Dept.	617-349-3251

Susan Evans Special Start, Cambridge School Dept.	617-349-3251
Christine Whitner Cambridge Head Start	617-349-3251
Marite Kovisars Associated Early Care and Education Children's of Cambridge and Central School	617-695-0700 x508
Sharon Imber Associated Early Care and Education Children's of Cambridge and Central School	617-695-0700 x508
Ellen Grant Valade Home Based Early Childhood Program Cambridge School Dept.	617-349-6849

Additional Resources

Alexandra Detjens
Violence Prevention Coordinator
Cambridge Health Dept.
617-665-3816

Leah Cefalo
Domestic Violence Liaison
Cambridge Police Dept.
617-349-3371

Iana Amrani Cohen
Director, Children with Voices, CGC
617-354-2275, x140