



Survivor-Centered & Trauma-Informed

*Complexities and Considerations for Working with
Domestic Violence Survivors*



Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence

By the end of this presentation, participants will have:

1. Reviewed the definition of domestic violence and identified less obvious forms of abuse.
2. Discussed how various life circumstances can impact someone's experience of domestic violence in both positive and negative ways.
3. Examined models for providing trauma-informed and culturally responsive support.
4. Generated a list of ways to increase survivor safety from an individual, familial, community, and societal perspective.
5. Identified and bookmarked the website for their local domestic violence service organization.

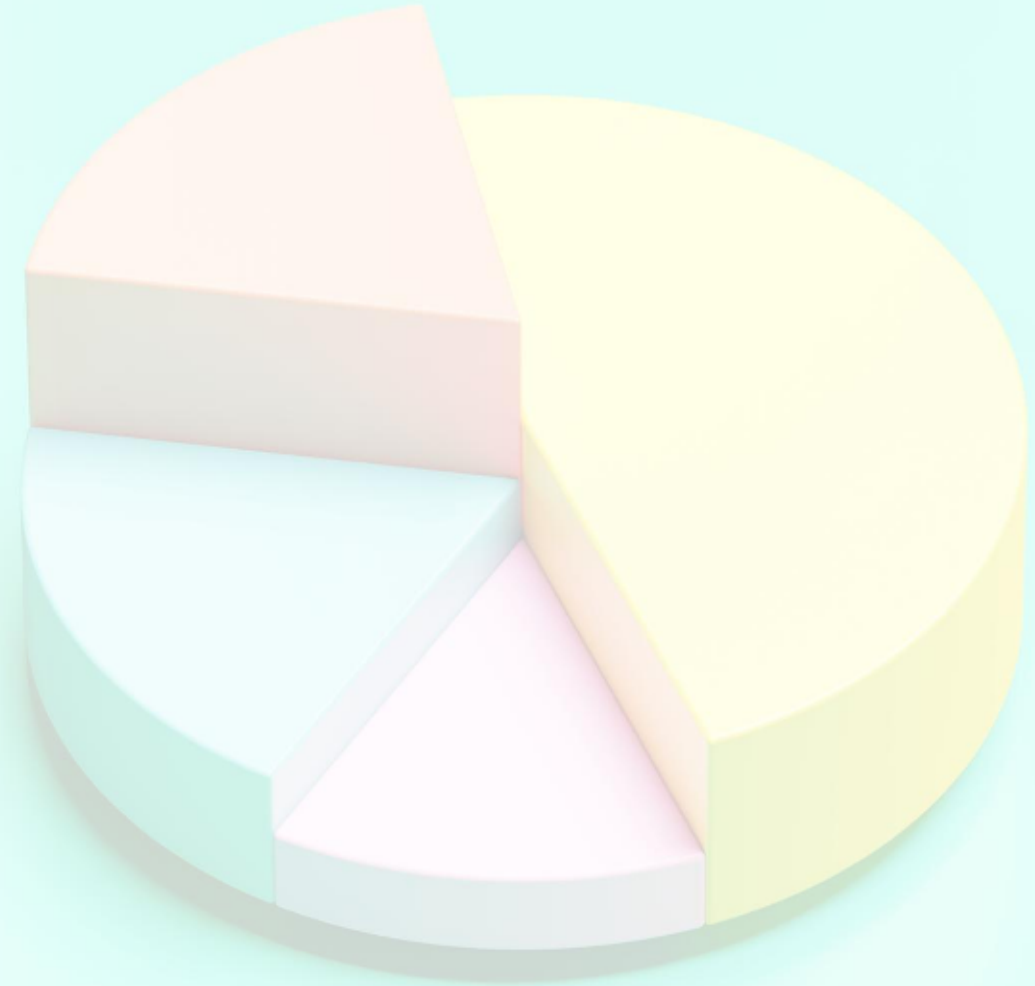




About **1 in 2 women** and more than **2 in 5 men** reported experiencing contact sexual violence, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner during their lifetime.

Although more research and data exists on cisgender women as IPV victims, we know that people of **all genders** can *experience or perpetrate IPV*.

Data suggests that **trans and nonbinary people** face a significant risk of IPV victimization.



What is Domestic Violence?

Domestic violence is a form of power-based interpersonal violence where one person uses a pattern of behaviors to establish and maintain **power and control** over another person(s), who is often a family member, spouse, dating or intimate partner.

Assaulting, threatening, harassing, strangling, or stalking an intimate partner is a **crime** in the state of Connecticut.

Methods of Control



Emotional



Psychological



Physical



Sexual



Financial



Technological



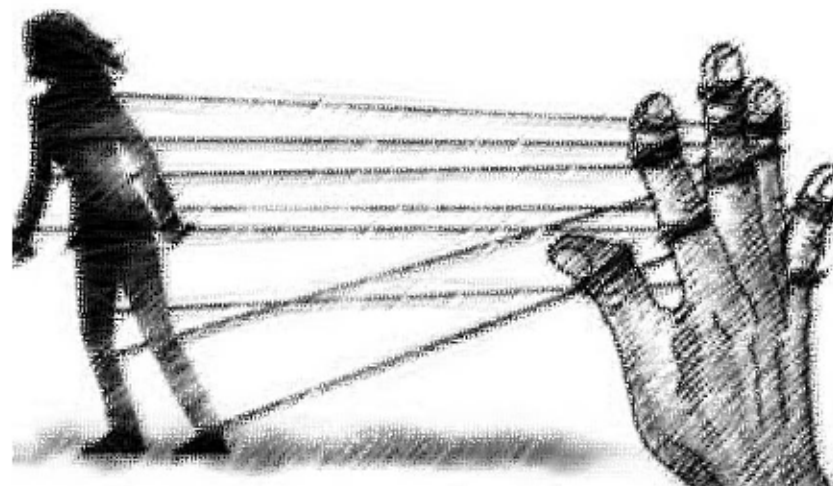
Legal



Stalking &
Harassment

Coercive Control

- Pattern of acts intended to harm, punish, frighten, dominate, isolate, degrade, monitor, or stalk the victim.
- Strategic and ongoing.
- Subtle behaviors that can be intertwined into every moment of every day.
- Not just psychological but structural, calculated, intentional, and premeditated.
- Often erodes a victim's autonomy, sense of identity, confidence, and self worth.
- Places victims in a state of abject entrapment.



Trauma

“Individual trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.”

SAMHSA's (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration)

EVENT – EXPERIENCE – EFFECT

Types of Trauma

Acute

Chronic

Complex

Generational

Historical

Trauma Manifestations

- Trauma can manifest in various ways including-
 - Loss of safety and security
 - Higher rates of depression and suicide
 - Reluctance to engage in supports
 - Mistrust of systems
 - Engaging in risky behaviors
 - Justice involvement
- Three common body and brain responses to Trauma-
 - Hypervigilance
 - Hyperarousal
 - Intrusion
 - Constrictions

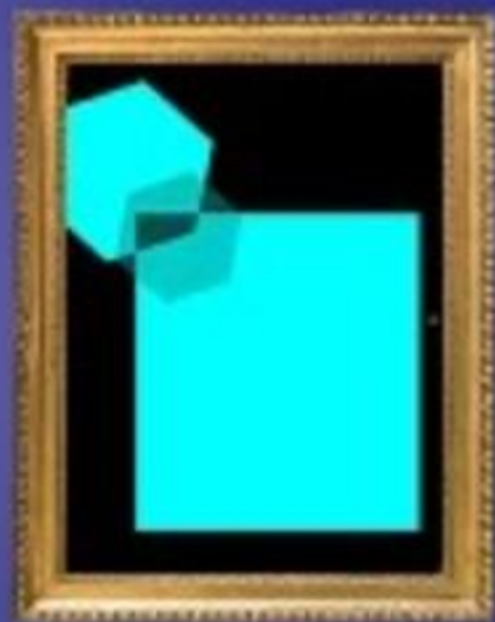


Life Circumstances Impacting DV

The Role of Culture, Religion, and Tradition



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Life Circumstances



Ethnicity

Race

Ability

Immigrant/Refugee status

Access to financial resources

Community values/safety

Social supports

Education

Gender

Age

Family Structure

Family Support

Parental Responsibilities

Language

Community resources

Day-to-day demands

Substance Use

Health (mental/physical)

Trauma

Social supports

Employment

Culture, Religion, Tradition



Culture encompasses the characteristics and knowledge of a particular group of people. It can include things like language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music, and arts.

Religion is a set of beliefs, practices, and symbols that connect individuals to a higher power or purpose.

Traditions are the customs, beliefs, and practices, passed down from generation to generation within a culture.

Culture, Religion, Tradition

- An individual's experience of domestic violence and how they may react to it.
- The abusive person's response to intervention and acceptance of responsibility.
- Access to services that might be crucial for the victim/survivor.



Culture, Religion, Tradition

- Cultural Beliefs and Norms
- Community and Family Pressure
- Racism and Discrimination
- Language Barriers
- Legal and Systematic Barriers
- Ideas about gender/gender roles



Cultural Humility & Cultural Responsiveness

- Maintaining an open and respectful attitude towards cultures that are different from your own.
- Dedication to lifelong learning.
- Recognizing and addressing one's own biases.
- Actively responding to and engaging with cultural differences in a way that is respectful and effective.



Redefining Safety

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What does safety look
like to you?



Safety: Professional Perspective



No violence

Safety: Survivor Perspective

Safety and success is what each survivor defines it to be.

No violence

Basic
Human
Needs Met

Social and
Emotional
Wellbeing

Often takes others into account—children, pets, others living in the home, community.

How can we increase safety for survivors...

...as individuals?

- Think about interpersonal interactions, how power shows up in your life.

...in our families?

- Think about family relationships and dynamics, familial history.

...in our neighborhoods?

- Think about interactions with neighbors, physical characteristics of our neighborhoods, community resources, local activities and gathering places, community leaders.

...societally?

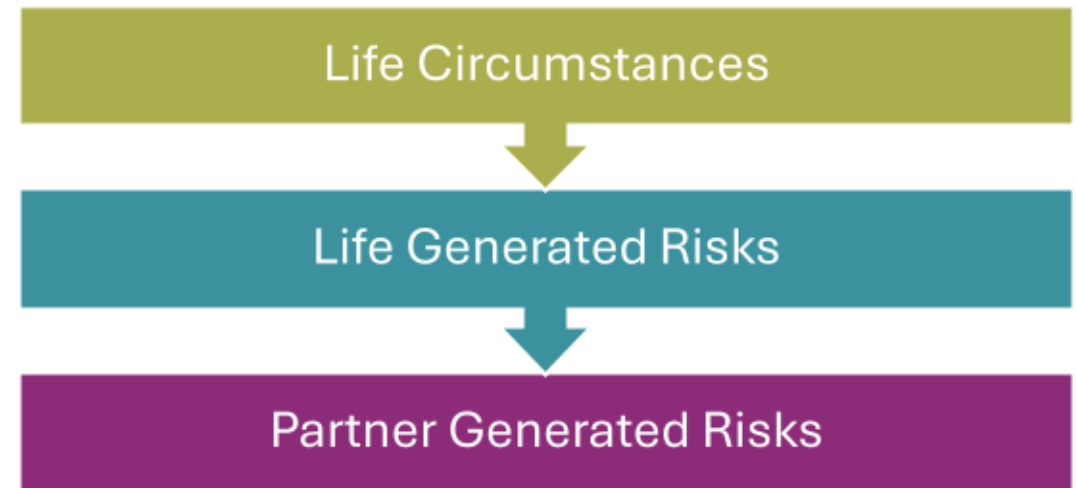
- Think about laws, policies, systems, institutions, etc.



Many victims/
survivors do not
want the relationship
to end; they want the
violence to stop.

Staying vs. Leaving

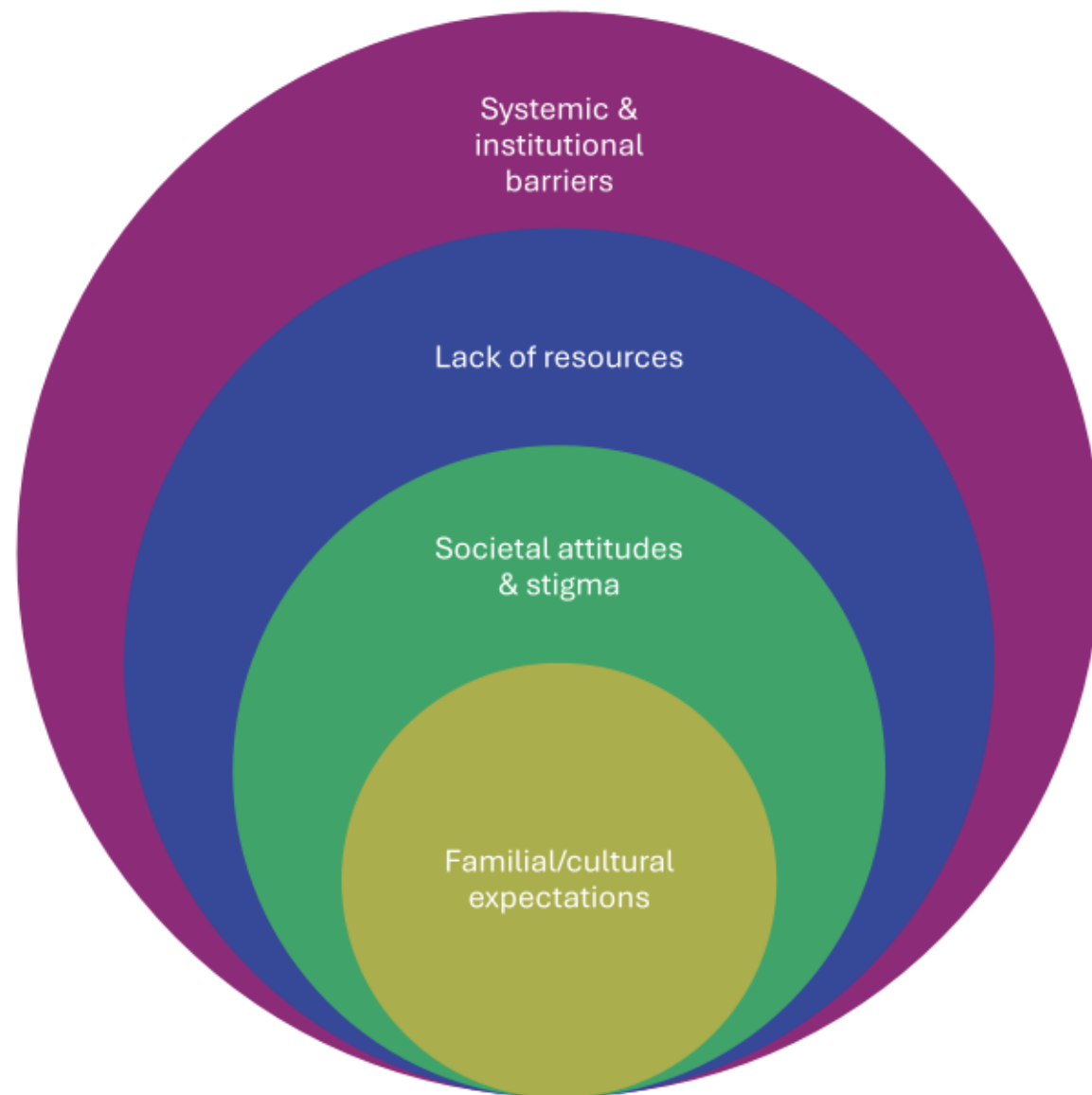
- The reason will be unique to each survivor, based on their specific situation.
- High lethality risk.
- Societal pressure should remain on the abusive person to stop the behavior, not on the survivor to leave.
- Leaving is a complex process that often occurs over time.



Challenges to Leaving



- ❖ Fear
- ❖ Love
- ❖ Guilt, Shame, embarrassment
- ❖ Fear of losing children
- ❖ Fear of being judged, not believed
- ❖ Economic dependence
- ❖ Isolation
- ❖ Partner promises to change
- ❖ Safer to stay
- ❖ Trauma
- ❖ Potential harm to children, pets, loved ones
- ❖ Fear of escalating violence
- ❖ Abuse has become normalized



Barriers Faced by Immigrant & Refugee Communities

- Language barriers
- Lack of knowledge or access to information regarding rights
- Stress of adaptation
- Poverty, economic dependence
- Lack of culturally and linguistically appropriate services
- Isolation, lack of support
- Fear of deportation
- Desire to keep family intact



Supporting Survivors

*Trauma Informed &
Culturally Responsive
Support*



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Trauma Informed Care & Cultural Sensitivity



Understanding
Cultural Differences



Effective
Communication



Tailored Support



Training & Education

4 Rs of Trauma Informed Care



The RICH Approach

RESPECT

- Viewing people as worthy of care and attention; believing that people are doing their best.

INFORMATION

- Providing people with information and resources.

CONNECTION

- Opening our hearts, sustaining relationships.

HOPE

- Giving hope and holding on to hope for people who may feel helpless.

Listen

Believe

Avoid making assumptions

Respect decisions

Don't judge

Maintain privacy

Prioritize safety

Connect

Seek additional guidance & support



Connecticut DV Resources

A Statewide Network of Information, Resources, and Support



Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence



Relationships can be difficult.

We're here to help.



Whenever you're ready, we're available. 24/7/365.
(888) 774-2900 or click below.

[Text Now](#)

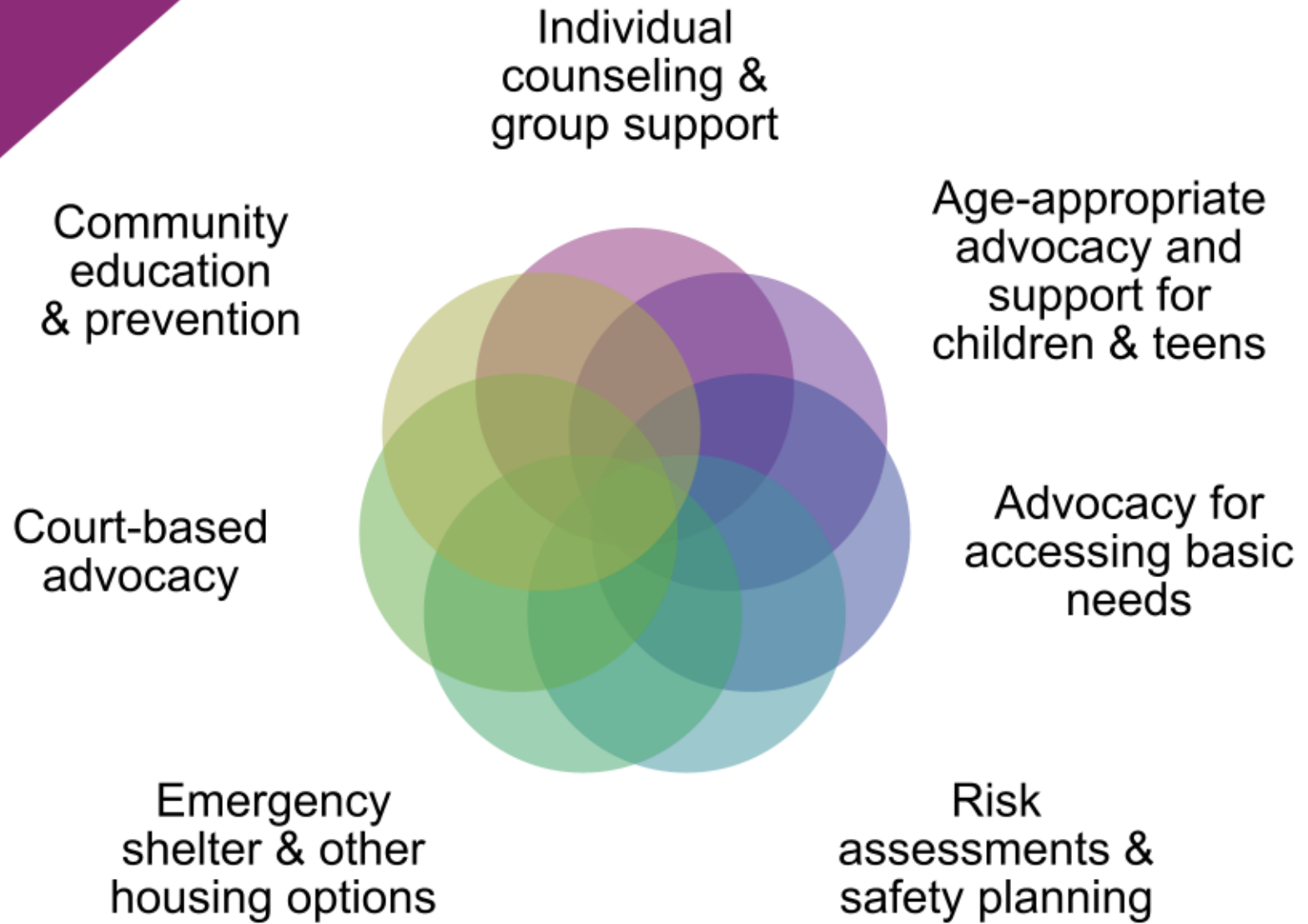
[Call Us](#)

[Email](#)

[Chat Now](#)



CCADV MEMBER ORGANIZATION SERVICES:







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Thank you!