DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, FAMILY VIOLENCE AND ELDER ABUSE IN THE SECOND HALF OF LIFE

Delia Gastelum, BHS
Program Coordinator
Late Life Domestic Violence / Elder Abuse Project
Administration of Resources & Choices

• A non profit agency founded in 1996 to provide necessary services to the aging community. ARC collaborates with law enforcement and criminal justice organizations to raise awareness and improve the community response to older persons who experience domestic violence and sexual assault.

• Serves the Cities of Tucson, South Tucson, Pima County
- Increase awareness about domestic violence and sexual assault in later life
- Promote more specialized services and trainings
- Enhance collaboration among service providers, community advocates and services for the aging
OBJECTIVES

- To identify differences between domestic and sexual violence and elder abuse.
- To learn the barriers faced by older victims of domestic/family violence and sexual assault.
- Identify appropriate assessment questions and resources
What’s Domestic Violence?

Domestic violence is a pattern of abusive behaviors used by one individual intended to exert power and control over another individual in the context of an intimate or family relationship.

**Pattern:** Domestic violence involves more than one or even several isolated incidents of violence. It involves an interrelated pattern that includes a wide variety of abusive behaviors and usually increases in frequency and intensity over time. The pattern of behaviors is not a matter of coincidence or the result of a time-limited crisis. Rather, it is an ongoing pattern in the relationship whereby the abuser acts to control the other person.

**Abusive behaviors:** Abusive or coercive behaviors may include, but are not limited to, physical assaults, verbal assaults, threats, intimidation, use of weapons, destruction of property, violence toward other significant people or pets, sexual manipulation, and control over economic resources.

**Intended to exert power and control:** Ongoing pattern of behavior on the part of the abuser in the relationship designed to maintain power over the partner. Battering happens when one person believes he or she is ENTITLED to control another. This happens when the relationship is not mutual.

**Intimate or family relationship:** A relationship between two adults intended to provide emotional and physical intimacy or the caregivers or adult children of that adult.
Family Abuse in Later Life

- Physical Violence: Threatens, Financially Exploits
- Psychological Abuse: Targets Vulnerabilities & Neglects
- Emotional Abuse: Denies access to spiritual traditions/events
- Sexual Violence: Uses Privilege
- Psychological Abuse: Uses Family Members
- Emotional Abuse:folio uses
- Isolates
- Fiducial personal & cultural values

Power & Control
POWER AND CONTROL WHEEL: THE INNER SPOKES

- These are behaviors that go on all the time. They make the victim feel trapped.
- Most of the abuser’s acts are non-criminal (emotional abuse, control, ridiculing values)
- Only when you understand the victim’s history (why she/he stays, why she/he minimizes) can you develop a rapport
THE OUTER WHEEL: PHYSICAL AND SEXUAL ABUSE

These behaviors of physical and sexual abuse are how the abuser enforces control – they instill fear.

These behaviors may be intermittent because the abuser is using subtle threats which are less easy to identify.
Spouse 15%

Adult Children 40%

Grandchildren 9%

Other 9%

Parents 6%

Other Relatives 8%

Siblings 6%

Service Providers 3%

Friend 3%

Unknown 1%

National Association of Adult Protective Services Administrators - National Center on Elder Abuse reproduction

FY- 1996 Statistics
WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN THE SECOND HALF OF LIFE?

- A pattern of coercive control and abuse of an older person in a trusted, ongoing relationship
- Primarily women, but includes older men
- Basis is “power and control” -
- Age 50 and Older
SCENARIOS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN LATER LIFE

Partner/Spouse
- Domestic Violence Grown Old
- New Relationship
- Late Onset Domestic Violence
- “Reverse” Domestic Violence
Family Violence

- Adult Children, Relatives/ Intimate Caregivers

- “Domestic elder abuse is a family problem- almost 90% of abusers were family members”

- “In the last decade domestic elder abuse reports investigated by APS have increased by more than 150%”

National Association of Adult Protective Services Administrators- National Center on Elder Abuse- 2001
What is Sexual Violence?

- Conduct of a sexual nature which is non-consensual, and is accomplished through threat, coercion, exploitation, deceit, force, physical or mental incapacitation, and / or power of authority.
WHAT IS ELDER ABUSE?

• Abuse, Neglect, and/or Exploitation of an Elder or Vulnerable Adult

• Includes Self-Neglect

• Age 60 and Older
Barriers Faced By Older Persons in Accessing Services

- Economic Barriers
- Self-Perception
- Caretaker or Dependency Concerns
- Health, Cognitive, and Functional Status
Barriers Faced By Older Persons in Accessing Services

- Internalized or Imposed Generational, Cultural, or Religious Values
- Transportation Issues
- Housing
- Isolation
Questions you might ask a victim/survivor

- Are you scared of your spouse or adult child for any reason?
- Do you feel safe in your home?
- Has your spouse or child ever pushed, pulled, shoved, pinched you?
- Are you afraid to answer these questions?
- How do you deal with arguments in your marriage/relationship?

What can you do for elderly victim/survivors of Domestic Violence?

- **T**ake time to listen
- **R**espect the victim/survivor
- **U**nderstand how difficult this is
- **S**upport the victim’s/survivor’s decisions
- **T**ell the victim/survivor, help is available
More info?

- For more information about The Late Life Domestic Violence/Elder Abuse Project call:
  520-623-3341
  PO Box 86802
  Tucson, AZ
visit our website at: [www.arc-az.org](http://www.arc-az.org)

Check out our Facebook page:
Administration of Resources and Choices

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