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SEIU LOCAL 1000
**WOMEN'S
COMMITTEE**

The purpose of the Local 1000's Women's Committee is to organize our fellow members into a more cohesive group and to share our experience by educating and mentoring a new generation of union leaders.

The Women's Committee will apply our progress to the fulfillment of the Local 1000 Purpose Statement and its goal to give women and all Californians the opportunity for a good life and to enjoy the fruits of social and economic justice.

- SEIU LOCAL 1000 -

WOMEN'S COMMITTEE



HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

Breaking *the* Cycle of **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

Know the Facts

What is Domestic Violence?

Domestic violence – also called spouse abuse, family violence, and wife beating – is abusive and violent behavior between people who are married or living together, or who have an ongoing or prior intimate relationship or couples who have children together. Although approximately 95 percent of victims are women, men (gay or straight) can also be victims.

The abuse can be physical, ranging from slaps and kicks to punching and stabbing; or psychological, including threats or verbal abuse that makes a person fear for their own safety or for the safety of their children or even their pets.

Resources:

NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE

1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

1-800-787-3224 (TDD)

RESOURCE CENTER ON CHILD PROTECTION AND CUSTODY

1-800-527-3223

BATTERED WOMEN'S JUSTICE PROJECT

1-800-903-0111

Getting Help: Safety Planning

If you are still in the relationship:

1. Think of a safe place to go if violence occurs – avoid rooms with no exits (bathrooms) or rooms with weapons (kitchen).
2. Think about and make a list of safe people to contact.
3. Keep change with you at all times.
4. Memorize all important numbers.
5. Establish a “code word” or sign so that family, friends, teachers, or co-workers know when to call for help.
6. Think about what you will say to your partner if they become violent.
7. Remember that you have the right to live without fear and violence.

If you have left the relationship:

1. Change your phone number.
2. Screen calls.
3. Save and document all contacts, messages, injuries or other incidents involving the abuser.
4. Change locks.
5. Avoid staying alone.
6. Plan how to get away if confronted.
7. If you have to meet, do so in public.
8. Vary your routine.
9. Notify school and work contacts.
10. Call your local domestic violence program.

If you leave the relationship, or are thinking of leaving, take important documents with you to enable you to apply for benefits or to take legal action, such as social security cards, birth certificates, your marriage license, leases or deeds regardless of whose name is on them, your checkbook and credit cards, bank statements, insurance policies, proof of income like check stubs or W-2 forms and any documentation of abuse like photos, police reports, medical records, etc.

What is a Safety Plan?

Every person in an abusive relationship needs a safety plan individualized for their needs. Important factors are age (of both the victim and any children involved), marital status, geographic location and resources available. Most contain common elements such as:

PLANNING ESCAPE ROUTES

Doors, first floor windows, basement exits, elevators, and stairwells. Rehearse different strategies and include your children if possible (practice can be called “fire drills” to lessen children’s anxiety).

CHOOSING A PLACE TO GO

Such as the home of a friend, relative or neighbor who will offer unconditional support or even to a motel, hotel or local shelter – most importantly somewhere where you will be safe.

PACKING A SURVIVAL KIT

Money for cab fare, change of clothes, extra house and car keys, important papers, medications, restraining or protection orders, child custody or child support orders, address books, and any items of exceptional personal value or meaning. The kit can be left with a trusted friend, relative or neighbor, kept in a safe deposit box, or, only as a last resort, hidden in your home.

STARTING ECONOMIC FREEDOM

Try to open an individual savings account. Have statements sent to a trusted relative or friend or arrange for electronic-only account notification to prevent your abuser from having knowledge of your account.

KNOWING IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Memorize the number for your local domestic violence program or hotline. Remember that you can always call 911 for assistance.

Review your safety plan monthly!

Compare ...

<i>Safe and Healthy Relationships</i>	<i>Abusive Relationships</i>
Partnerships have joint decision making and shared responsibilities determined together.	Domination occurs when the abuser makes all or most decisions in a servant/master relationship.
Economic Equality means the freedom to decide about issues of work, school and money.	Economic Control occurs when you are denied the ability to work and/or access to joint money is withheld from you.
Honest Emotions can flourish when both parties feel safe to admit fears or insecurities.	Emotional Abuse can take the form of jealousy, stress, and frustration as an excuse for violence.
Sexual Respect is accepting that no means no and honoring your partner’s feelings and needs.	Sexual Abuse occurs when a partner forces sex on you physically or uses emotional leverage or threats to force you to “give in”.
Physical Safety includes respect for your partner’s physical space and includes non-violent forms of self expression.	Physical Abuse includes hitting, choking, restraining, threatening, or brandishing weapons, even if not used.
Supportive & Trusting relationships happen when both sides listen to their partner and value their feelings and opinions.	Controlling relationships center on verbal abuse, mind games, and isolating the victim from support systems.

If you are the Victim of Domestic Violence:

Begin to think about how you can plan for your own safety and happiness. Waiting for abusers to change and trying harder to please them will not work.

Find out what resources are available in your area for victims of partner abuse. A good place to start is your state or county department of social services. At a safe time, when the abuser is not around, call a local domestic violence program. Tell them what has happened and ask what your choices are to protect yourself. Think about the answers to your questions and call again if you need to know more.

If you are considering leaving your abuser, make safety plans before you talk about separation. Discuss the abuser's pattern of violence with someone at a crisis line or domestic violence program and think about what risks there might be if you talk about leaving. Try to keep enough money in a protected place to use when you need it to get to safety. Some victims find it best to go to a shelter where they can be safe before they tell the abuser that they are leaving.

If you can do it safely, encourage the abuser to go to a group for batterers. There are now many such groups including ones for men, women, gays, lesbians, and particular ethnic and religious groups. This way, an abuser can get help from specially trained experts so that they may learn to change their beliefs and behaviors. You may still need to live apart from the abuser while that person is in treatment. Changing patterns of behavior can take a long time.

If you think you are in danger, you probably are. You are the expert at sensing when things are getting really bad. Listen to your inner voice—it exists to protect you and your children. Flee at once to a safe location or call the police. Ask what legal protections are available to you and use whatever you need to be sure you are safe. Don't let the police leave you alone with the abuser. Be sure to note any injuries and make sure medical personnel note that the injuries were the result of an assault, not falling down stairs or other "accidents."

If you are an abuser:

Get help to end your violent behavior. Hurting the people you love will cost you their trust and respect as well as your own self-respect. You may lose your loved ones permanently. No one likes to be violent or to get hurt.

Realize that you can change. Others have gone through this and found ways to stop their violent behavior. Their lives and relationships with those they love have gotten better. Call a state or local domestic violence program or hotline. You don't have to give your name to get information. Ask for referrals to a batterers' group or expert therapist in your area. Be honest with the people running the group or with an individual therapist about your history of violence. Let them know that you want to change the violent behavior. Don't wait until a judge requires you to go to treatment.

If you are a friend or family member:

You can do something. Encourage the victim to get to safety and help keep that person and her children safe. Don't accept excuses for violence from people you love.

Call the police if the victim cannot.