



Risk, Danger & Context

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Overview

Terminology & Magnitude

Risk factors

Military & Veteran Issues and
Statistics

Lethality

Assessing for risk & danger

Context & Contextual Analysis



Terminology

Victims & Survivors

Gender

Domestic violence (DV) - Includes siblings, parents, etc. in some states

Intimate partner violence (IPV) - Physical, sexual, or psychological harm by current or former partner or spouse

Battering - An ongoing pattern of coercion, intimidation, and emotional abuse, reinforced by use and threat of physical and sexual violence



IPV Statistics

Approximately 10.5 million victims of violence by an intimate partner each year

Women are disproportionately affected by IPV, sexual violence (SV), and stalking

Female victims frequently experience multiple forms of IPV (i.e. rape, physical violence, stalking); male victims most often experience physical violence

IPV, SV, and stalking victims experience negative impacts and health consequences

CDC's National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (2010)

Risk Factors

- Access to lethal weapons
- Threats to kill partner
- Threats of suicide
- History of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse toward intimate partners
- History of violent behavior toward family members (including children), acquaintances, and strangers
- Relationship instability, especially recent separation or divorce
- Presence of other life stressors, including employment/financial problems or recent loss
- Evidence of mental health problems and/or substance abuse

Risk Factors (Cont'd)

- Childhood history of witnessing or being a victim of family violence
- Resistance to change and lack of motivation for treatment
- Antisocial attitudes and behaviors
- Attitudes that support violence toward women
- A pattern of coercive control
- Stalking
- Strangulation
- Forced sex

Military & Veteran Issues

Majority of servicemembers in the ages at highest risk for IPV (18-29)

Mobility and geographic separation

Medical and psychological issues from combat exposure and military service

Unemployment

Homelessness

Firearms training & experience

Suicide



Military vs. Civilian IPV

2010 National Intimate and Sexual Violence Survey

- First time military sample – active duty women (2,800) and partners of active duty men (9,000)
- Little difference found in military and civilian IPV
- Active duty women
 - Less likely to indicate IPV in the 3 years prior to the survey
 - Less likely to experience stalking
 - Higher rates of IPV and SA for those with deployment history

Lethal IPV

Surveillance for Violent Deaths - National Violent Death Reporting System (2013)

- IPV was a precipitating factor in 47.5% of homicides among females, only 9.3% among males.
- 44% of males and 39% of females who committed suicide experienced an intimate partner crisis
- 21% of homicides/legal intervention deaths committed by or involved a current or former spouse or intimate partner (2nd to acquaintance/friend)
- Relationship problems, specifically intimate partner problems, frequently preceded suicides and homicides

Lethal IPV

Firearms were the most common weapon used by males to murder females

70% of female firearm homicide victims were killed with handguns; Over 2/3 were murdered by male intimates

Sixteen times as many females were murdered by a male they knew than were killed by male strangers

Most often, female murders occurred in the course of an argument

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence Policy Office:
When Men Murder Women: An Analysis of 2010 Homicide Data

Most significant risk factors for lethality

Threats to kill

Alcohol / substance abuse

Access to a gun

Unemployment

Pet abuse

Past acts of domestic violence

Risk and Danger Assessment

An ongoing process, not a one-time event

Victims are best source of information

Some victims' perceptions vastly different than an advocate's or an assessment; may downplay risk and signs of danger

Some of most dangerous cases are where there has been no intervention;

But- Intervention can also compromise safety – unintended consequences

Benefits of Risk Assessment

Develop more realistic safety plans with victims

Educate criminal justice practitioners about risk

Provide a shared language about risk, lethality and recidivism

Help the criminal justice system identify appropriate:

Bail, Conditions of release, supervision strategies, and other types of court-ordered treatment

Assessing Risk of Future Abuse or Lethality

“It's tough to make predictions, especially about the future.” *Yogi Berra*

“One can never really know which batterer will attempt to kill a battered woman or her children”
Hart, 1988

Assessing for Risk Factors

What do we want the information for?

Will we use a tool?

How do we integrate identification of risk factors into institutional practice,

How is it documented,

How do we ensure that the next intervenor has access to this information?

Assessment Tools

DVSI (Domestic Violence Screening Instrument)

- Predictive of recidivism
- Most questions rely on available information; A few are asked of victim
- Commonly used by Pre-trial for bail recommendations; Probation for case management

SARA (Spouse Abuse Risk Assessment)

- Predictive of recidivism
- Longer and includes clinical factors and victim questions
- Commonly used by Probation to inform court, case management strategies, and level of supervision

Assessment Tools

Danger Assessment (DA)

- Predictive of lethality and recidivism
- Information gathered solely from the victim
- Used by victim advocates with survivors in safety planning
- www.dangerassessment.org

Contextual Analysis – Why?

Risk: Level of risk and danger is associated with the **history** of the violence and the **tactics used** by the offender

Safety planning: Takes into account different forms of coercion or violence present in each situation

Intervention: Effectiveness depends upon practitioners understanding the context in which the violence was used, **exceptional documentation**, and focusing efforts on the **appropriate party**.

Contexts of IPV

Violence in exercise of coercive control (Battering)

- Patterned set of behaviors
- Coercion and intimidation distinguish it from non-battering
- Entrapment essential goal

Coercion & Control

Power & Control Wheel



Military Power & Control Wheel



*National Center on
Domestic and Sexual Violence*

Contexts of IPV

Violence in exercise of coercive control (Battering)

- Patterned set of behaviors
- Coercion and intimidation distinguish it from non-battering
- Entrapment essential goal

Non-battering use of violence (Situational)

- NOT part of an attempt to establish an ongoing position of dominance in a relationship or in response to being battered

Contexts of IPV (Cont'd)

Pathological violence

- Substance abuse
- Psychological problems (e.g., depression, mental illness, PTSD, TBI)

Violent resistance

- Broader strategy by victims to stop or contain abuse, including violence directed at the abuser
- Battered Women's Syndrome
- Imperfect self-defense

All IPV can lead to serious bodily injury or death

Context Scenario #1

Joe, arrested for domestic assault.

Police report: GF states that Joe, who is in the National Guard, has not been himself and has been binge drinking. Sunday night, he was drinking. After he went to bed he woke up screaming. She tried to calm him down, and he slapped her several times across the face and pulled out his gun from the nightstand.

She called the police because he became more and more agitated, waving his gun and acting “crazy”.

She says she’s concerned because he’s depressed and frequently has abusive outbursts over what she considers minor issues. She tells you that she never felt her relationship was uncomfortable or abusive and that he wasn’t like this before returning from combat in Afghanistan.

What else do you need to know?

Context Scenario #2

Anthony, arrested for Domestic Assault

Police report: Victim Marie states she and her husband were arguing because she was threatening to leave and go to her sister's house. He threatened to kick her a## if she didn't shut up. She felt afraid and locked herself in the bathroom with her baby and called the police. Anthony started to kick the door and broke it down. He grabbed Marie and dragged her out of the bathroom. The police arrived and arrested Anthony.

Victim states that her husband hit her often when they were first married 2 years ago, but hasn't been violent for almost a year. She said she is still afraid of him because he threatens her whenever she does something he doesn't like, especially when she talks about leaving. The victim said she wants to leave the relationship, but her husband, a veteran, has threatened to inform Child Protection Services (CPS) that she is using drugs even

What else do you need to know?

Context Scenario #3

Devon, Arrested for Domestic Violence

Police Report; Police responded to call from neighbor

Devon grabbed victim's purse (Wife, Sandi) and pushed her away from him. She said she fell to the floor, hitting her head on the glass coffee table. Victim was bleeding severely from head and face and transported to the hospital.

The victim said that she and her husband, a veteran of Desert Storm, frequently get into arguments over money. Her husband has been laid off from his job, and she says the home is a tense place. She says that her husband has been accusing her of spending money recklessly. The current incident started because she wanted to go to the mall. She says she's concerned about the incident but not afraid. Victim states there has been no history of violence in the relationship.

What else do you need to know?

Context Scenario #4

Anne, arrested for Domestic Violence

Police report: The victim (Chris) tells you that her wife, an Army sergeant who has deployed multiple times to Iraq and Afghanistan, was in a bad mood and started drinking.

Anne said Chris had been arguing with her all night accusing her of infidelity. She states that Chris has recently become more and more intimidating, violent and jealous. Anne said she went to the kitchen to get a drink. Chris followed her and slapped the wine bottle out of her hand. Anne states that Chris picked up a piece of glass and threatened to cut Anne's face. She said Chris has assaulted her in the past, causing minor injuries.

Anne said she slapped Chris in the face, picked up her phone, left the house and called the police. Police arrived and Chris has red mark on cheek. Anne is arrested.

What else do you need to know?

Questions and Answers

