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DOMESTIC ABUSE: DEFINITIONS AND CAUSES

WHAT IS DOMESTIC ABUSE?

Domestic abuse is:

- A pattern of violent and/or coercive tactics committed by one intimate partner against another.
- A pattern of controlling behavior that consists of physical, sexual, and psychological abuse or assaults and emotional abuse.
- A learned pattern of behavior.
- While most perpetrators are men, it is important to remember that most men are not perpetrators. Victims may be men or women as well as those in same sex relationships.

WHAT CAUSES DOMESTIC ABUSE?

Domestic abuse is caused by the need of a perpetrator to have power and control over an intimate partner. Batterers use the power they have, social and/or physical, to establish control within an intimate relationship. They use a pattern of behaviors to intimidate, manipulate, and physically violate their partners.

- Physical abuse is one aspect of an effective strategy for creating and maintaining power and control.
- Domestic abuse is learned through observation, experience, and reinforcement in culture, family, and community (i.e., schools, peer groups, etc.)

Source:
"Cut It Out" Participant's Guide
Domestic Violence Education Program
Salons Against Domestic Violence Abuse Fund
401 North Michigan Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60611
www.cutitout.org