

About seventy-percent of all female deaths are domestic homicides; almost half of the women who die due to homicide are killed by their current or former husbands or significant other. Not only is the violence of men perpetrated onto the women or significant others, but children have been victims of the father's displaced aggressions also (Bartol & Bartol, 2010, p. 119).

It is my opinion that domestic violence triggers and is a precursor to criminal behavior for these reasons: According to social learning theories, persons receiving harsh discipline learn that physical violence can be used to change the behaviors of others (Bartol & Bartol, 2010, p. 283). Dr. James Alsdurf, author of "Battered into Submission" (2004), stated that at the center of all painful atrocities are power and control. He suggests that the lack of power and/or control stimulates a person to commit behaviors of violence (Alsdurf, 2001, p. 1). I agree with him that they are a major cause of violence. There are many more causes of family violence.

Children grow to be abusive because they were abused themselves (Bartol & Bartol, 2010, p. 283). Domestic Violence (DV) was not always considered a serious crime. The Roman Catholic Church encouraged and supported man's entitlement to physically discipline the children and wife and the right of sexual access to the wife. To this date, the Church has not taken a public stand on DV in the home (Alsdurf, 2001, p. 2). Another factor is the presence or use of alcohol and drugs; they only magnify and instigate the dominating role of the male partner. Finally, men who fail as providers and are under constant stress may take their frustrations out on the wife and child (Siegel, 2007, p. 341).

Children witnessing violence in the home accept this learned behavior as normal and effective when settling disputes or trying to resolve conflict; this is because this is the behavior they saw modeled by the parents or other influential adults in their lives (Bartol & Bartol, 2010, p. 283). Children perceive that the use of violence forces others to comply in a certain manner, thus setting in motion the "cycle of violence." The "cycle of violence" is the transfer or passing down of learned violent acts from one generation to another; this is accomplished by the modeling the violent behavior of the parent. Children who experience the 'cycle of violence' are more likely as adults to approve of violence in conflict resolution (Siegel, 2007, p. 340).

Family violence has far-reaching effects on the abused psychologically, emotionally, physically, and financially. The violence, more than likely, contributes to the break-up of the family unit when the abuser is incarcerated or the family gets separated due to the violence. Most families suffer financially when the “breadwinner” is jailed or ordered to leave the family home. Children and women suffer low self esteem and identity problems when they have to leave the family home for a homeless shelter (Meadows, 2010, p. 67).

References:

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