

Intimate Partner Violence Interventions and Cost Consequences — Synthesis of Research Findings

OVERVIEW

Definitions for intimate partner violence (IPV) vary widely, but according to the CDC IPV include “physical, sexual, or psychological harm by a current or former partner or spouse”.¹ Current estimates of IPV most likely underestimate the scope of the problem due to low levels of reporting, especially among men. In spite of these underestimations, approximately 5.3 million incidents of IPV occur every year among US women and 3.2 million incidents occur among men. More than 1 million women and 371,000 men are stalked every year, and 20% of nonfatal violence against women is due to IPV.⁴³ The consequences of IPV are both physical and economic, and affect individuals, families, and employers. Health consequences range from bruises and broken bones to HIV infection. Mental health effects include depression, anxiety, and substance abuse.⁴³

ECONOMIC IMPACT

The financial implications of IPV affect all sectors of society; nationally IPV costs society \$8.9 billion dollars in direct and indirect costs. Of these expenditures, \$6.4 billion are for physical assault, \$484 million for rapes, and \$1.2 billion for murders.² The effects of IPV are especially apparent in the workplace. Intimate partner violence increases the likelihood that a female employee will be absent or tardy, and decreases her productivity at work. Lost productivity results from both on the job harassment by the abuser and from events occurring during non-working. Victims of IPV also face increased odds of job loss, something that has negative economic implications for both the employee and employer.³ One estimate found that IPV causes 13.5 million days of lost productivity, costing employers \$1.13 billion.⁴⁴ Additionally, women who leave work because of IPV often turn to public assistance for economic support.^{45,4} Employers also pay higher healthcare costs for victims of IPV; one study found an additional \$2,891 was spent on each victim of IPV compared to non victims over the course of a year.⁴⁵ All costs reported have been inflation adjusted for the first half of 2006.

INTERVENTION

Clearly IPV has serious social, physical, and economic consequences. Unfortunately, interventions effective in preventing IPV have not been well established to date⁵ and greater societal attention is needed.

STATE ACTIVITIES

State MCH programs are taking a lead role in addressing the issue of IPV through a wide range of programs. Examples of state activities include:

- Developing public service announcements addressing IPV (AK, AZ)
- Creating database systems that accurately track the number of women who are victims of IPV (AK, AZ)
- Developing education materials for physicians and other healthcare providers to promote screening and referrals (AK, AZ)
- Working with community groups, including hair salon owners, to increase referrals to domestic violence shelters and services (AL, AZ, IL, MD, NM, CT, RI, SC)

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/factsheets/ipvoverview.htm>. Accessed 9/28/06.

² Max W, Rice DP, Finkelstein E, Bardwell RA, Leadbetter S. The economic toll of intimate partner violence against women in the United States. *Violence Vict.* 2004 Jun;19(3):259-72.

³ Swanberg JE, Logan T, Macke C. Intimate partner violence, employment, and the workplace: consequences and future directions. *Trauma Violence Abuse.* 2005 Oct;6(4):286-312.

⁴ Hetling AH. Addressing Domestic Violence as a Barrier to Self-sufficiency: The Relationship of Welfare Receipt and Spousal Abuse. *Journal of Public and International Affairs.* 2000 Spring;11:21-35.

⁵ Wathen CN, MacMillan HL. Interventions for violence against women: scientific review. *JAMA.* 2003 Feb 5;289(5):589-600.