

Myths & Truths

1. Battering is rare: Battering is extremely common. 1/3 to 1/2 of all women in the United States will be assaulted by their intimate partner at some time in their life.

2. Domestic violence occurs only in low income, poorly educated families: This behavior crosses all socio/economic, racial and religious lines. Doctors, Ministers, Psychologists, Police officers, Judges and other professionals have battered their wives.

3. Women are just as violent as men: There are rare cases where a woman batters a man, and battering occurs in homosexual relationships also, but in the greatest majority (around 95%) of cases it is a man battering a woman.

4. All members of the family must change for the violence to stop. Only the perpetrator has the ability to stop the violence. Battering is a behavioral choice. Many women who are battered make numerous attempts to change their behavior in the hope that this will end the abuse. This does not work.

5. Domestic violence is usually a one-time event, an isolated incident: Battering is a pattern. Once violence begins in a relationship it almost always escalates both in frequency and severity.

6. Battered Women choose to stay in the violent relationship: Many battered women leave their abusers permanently, and despite many obstacles, succeed in building a life free of violence. Almost all battered women leave at least once. The perpetrator dramatically escalates his violence and coercive tactics when she leaves (or tries to).

- 50 to 75% of all homeless women and children are fleeing domestic violence.
- A woman is at a 75% greater risk of being killed or injured when attempting to leave.
- Every month, more than 50,000 women in the United States seek a restraining/protective order.
- There are 3 times more animal shelters than safe houses for victims in this Country.

7. Men who batter are often good fathers and should have joint custody: Of the men who batter their female partner, 70% sexually or physically abuse their children. More than 3 million children every year witness domestic violence and this causes as much psychological damage as though they were assaulted themselves.

For additional information contact the CSS Women's Commission at 704-336-3210.