

Experiencing Homelessness in the context of Domestic Violence

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Mid-Willamette Homeless Initiative Taskforce

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Understanding Domestic Violence

Domestic Violence is a pattern of controlling and coercive behaviors that one person uses to gain power and maintain control over the other.



Domestic Violence impacts every segment of our society:

- Homes
- Schools
- Faith Communities
- Public Services (criminal justice, social services, etc.)

Domestic Violence on the National Level

- ▶ In a 2012 survey of 25 cities, 28% of Mayors cited domestic violence as a leading cause of homelessness among families with children.

The United States Conference of Mayors (2012)

- ▶ The need for safe housing and the economic resources to maintain safe housing are two of the most pressing concerns among abused women who are planning to or have recently left abusers.

A. Clough, J.E. Draughon, V. Njie-Carr, C. Rollins, & N. Glass (2014)

- ▶ Approximately 63% of homeless women have experienced domestic violence in their adult lives.

National Network to End Domestic Violence

Domestic Violence in Oregon

- ▶ 37% of women in Oregon will experience domestic violence, sexual assault and/or stalking in their lifetime (Center for Disease Control, 2010)
- ▶ More than 25% of survivors in Oregon report having a mental, physical, or emotional disability. Almost 20% of Oregon's houseless women report domestic violence as a primary reason for their houselessness.
- ▶ Last year, more than 10,000 requests for shelter beds for victims of domestic violence were turned away due to lack of space.

Domestic Violence in Marion County

- ▶ 11 DV Homicides in Marion County in the last 5 years
- ▶ One last month (September 2015)
- ▶ 80% of female inmates in Marion County had been victims of domestic violence (Jail survey)
- ▶ CHS has averaged more than 20,000 contacts a year for the last four years
- ▶ 200-500 adults and children in shelter every year (typically one-half of all shelter residents are children)



Services for Victims & Survivors of DV in Marion & Polk Counties

Center for Hope & Safety

(formerly Mid-Valley Women's Crisis Service)

- ▶ CHS provides the only confidential emergency shelter in Marion County.
- ▶ CHS has provided more than 136,000 nights of shelter to nearly 16,000 children and adults in the last 37 years.
- ▶ CHS provides emergency shelter, food, clothing, safety planning, peer counseling, emergency transportation, 9-1-1 cell phones, and intensive case management, to lead victims out of crisis toward self-reliance.

Polk County

- ▶ SABLE House | 503-623-6703 | SableHouse.org

Housing and Domestic Violence

DV is one of the leading causes of homelessness for women and children (families) in the U.S.

- ▶ Survivors often must leave housing to escape DV
- ▶ May be evicted due to abuser's behavior
- ▶ DV interferes with ability to access housing - bad credit, poor rental histories, safety needs
- ▶ Abusers sabotage survivor's economic stability - trouble paying deposit, rent and utilities

What CHS is doing now & in the future



- ▶ New emergency confidential shelter

- ▶ **PEARLS Project**
(*Personal Empowerment for Achieving Real Lasting Security*)



► Transitional Housing



Key Insights for the MVHI Taskforce

- ▶ It is easy to lose sight of the impact of domestic violence
- ▶ Focusing on one population may disparately impact on victims of DV
- ▶ Need a continuum of housing options to address DV
- ▶ What can the Taskforce do to make a difference for victims of DV?



Questions?

Center for **HOPE & SAFETY**



Formerly Mid-Valley Women's Crisis Service

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