

Every minute
in the US, 20 people are
physically abused by an
intimate partner.

**That's more than 10 million
people every year.**

It needs to stop.

**SACRAMENTO REGIONAL
FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER**
Hope Thrives Here



The Epidemic of Violence

Sacramento Regional Family Justice Center provides wraparound services to domestic violence survivors

by Faith Whitmore

Domestic violence is not an aberration — it’s an epidemic. Domestic violence is exceedingly more complicated than making poor relationship choices. It affects extended families — especially children — and entire communities.

More than 50% of homeless women and children are on the streets because of domestic violence. The statistics are staggering.

More than 1 in 3 women and more than 1 in 7 men have experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner.

Every day, more than 20,000 phone calls are placed to domestic violence hotlines nationwide. That’s almost 15 calls per minute.

72% of all murder-suicides involved an intimate partner — 94% of the victims of these crimes are females.

About five million children are exposed to domestic violence every year. These children are more likely to attempt suicide, abuse drugs and alcohol, run away from home, get ensnared in teenage prostitution or commit sexual assault crimes.

Domestic violence is a public safety issue. According to the FBI, 14% of all police officer deaths are the result of domestic violence calls. Recently, Sacramento City police officer Tara O’Sullivan was killed when responding to such a call. Her killer already had a long history of domestic violence.

Domestic violence lurks in the background of many mass shooters. For instance, Adam Lanza began his killing spree at home by shooting his mother before he massacred 20 children and 6 staff members at Sandy Hook Elementary School.

Dylann Roof witnessed years of abuse by his father to his stepmother. If someone had intervened earlier in his life, perhaps it would have saved the nine people he shot at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina.

Domestic violence also has an enormous economic impact.

Domestic violence victims lose nearly 8 million days of paid work — equivalent to more than 32,000 full-time jobs. The cost of domestic violence exceeds \$5.8 billion each year, including \$4.1 billion for direct medical and mental health services.

About 50% of employed women who are abused are also harassed at work by their abusive partners.

64% of domestic violence victims indicated their ability to work was affected by the violence.

73% of domestic violence victims stay with their abusive partner because of economic reasons.

This must stop. The Sacramento Regional Family Justice Center stands ready to help. We hope this publication provides awareness, education and resources to stem the tide of domestic violence.

Contact us. We are here for you.

**“The
Sacramento
Regional Family
Justice Center stands
ready to help.”**

Faith Whitmore
CEO, Sacramento Regional Family
Justice Center



Voice of the Vice Mayor

Eric Guerra

*Sacramento City Council, Family Justice
Center Board Member*

“Our police department in Sacramento has gone through more training to identify situations of domestic violence and helping to assist with that. We still need to put more resources into helping the survivors of domestic violence get the help they need. If cities don’t get ahead of this early to support organizations like the Family Justice

Center and sponsor youth programs, we’ll only be responding in the aftermath with our police departments. Also, if we’re going to make a difference, we have to make sure we’re providing support for those programs that provide the wraparound services so we can make it seamless.”



The Ties That Bind

Escaping domestic violence hurts less in the long run than staying

by Howard Hardee

People always ask me, ‘Why did you stay for so long?’ Once you get into it, it’s so hard to walk out,” she said. “I never thought it would be me in that type of situation.”

As a young woman, Pat met someone she thought was perfect. He was from a small town in the South, like her, and they shared many of the same interests. They got married and moved to the Bay Area, thousands of miles away from most of her family in Florida.

“In the beginning, it was romantic; we spent a lot of time together,” she said. In retrospect, however, the honeymoon stage fooled her into thinking her husband was somebody he wasn’t.

It began with unkindness. He would say demeaning things that chipped away at her self esteem and caused her embarrassment — “You can’t do anything right,” or “You don’t look good in that dress.” Instead of interpreting the emotional abuse as a red flag, Pat said, she internalized the negativity and “tried to do better.”

About five years after they got married, money was tight and their two young sons occupied most of Pat’s attention. Her husband, frustrated with the situation, stepped up his verbal attacks — and then got physical. Pat

called the police after her husband struck her for the first time, and was told to leave her home. “They said they could do nothing to keep me safe,” she said.

She left in the middle of the night, driving her boys to stay with her sister in Fairfield. However, based on the advice of church elders who urged her to save the marriage, she went back to her husband. “I love the church, and I know they were telling me to do what they thought was right,” she said.

However, the abuse continued for another 15 years.

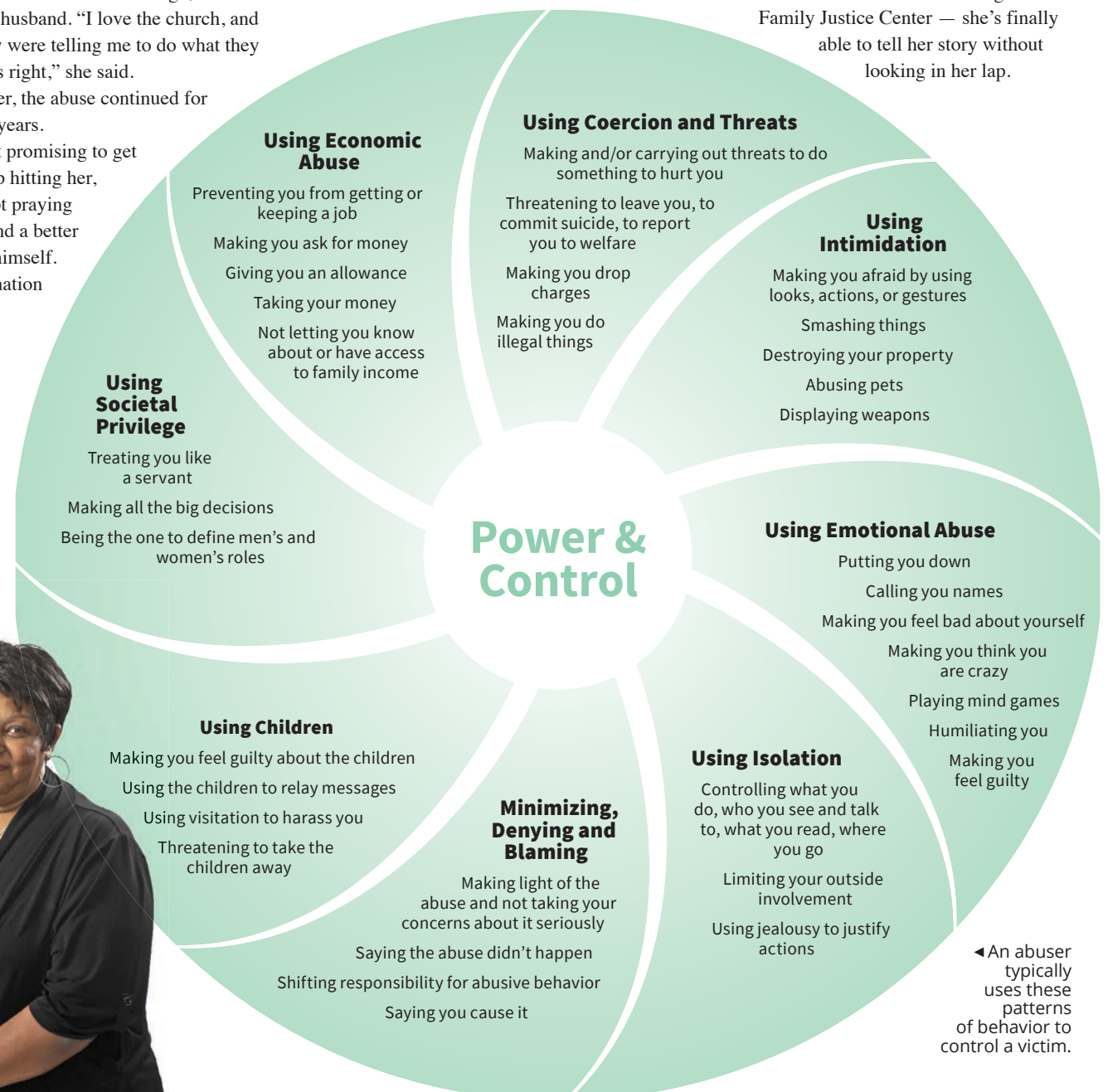
He kept promising to get help, to stop hitting her, and she kept praying that he’d find a better version of himself. The combination of isolation and deep,

overwhelming shame kept her silent. She just didn’t talk about it — not with family, not with friends. “I kept secrets,” she said, “and secrets will destroy you.”

In addition to outside pressure to stay in the relationship and her own fear of change, she didn’t want her sons to grow up without

a father. “That was truly a mistake,” she says. She left for good after her husband hit one of her sons.

Pat is a proud grandmother now. She still feels ashamed about enduring so many years of emotional and physical abuse, but as a member of the VOICES committee — a support group associated with the Sacramento Regional Family Justice Center — she’s finally able to tell her story without looking in her lap.



“People always ask me, ‘Why did you stay for so long?’ Once you get into it, it’s so hard to walk out.”

Pat
VOICES Member

PHOTO BY
ANNE STOKES

When It's Time to Leave

The Danger Assessment tool gives victims a way to measure their risk level

In order to survive, physically and psychologically, many victims normalize their situation.

This abbreviated Danger Assessment, first developed by Jacquelyn Campbell, RN and PhD., notes 21 indicators to identify the level of potential violence faced by a victim.

The more yes answers, the greater the danger in which you are living. This tool not only helps victims, but assists those who love and care for them.



Mark **Yes** or **No** for each of the following.
(The questions refer to your experience with your husband/wife, your partner, your ex-husband/wife, your ex-partner, or whoever is currently physically hurting you.)*

Yes	No		Yes	No		Yes	No	
☐	☐	Has the physical violence increased in severity or frequency over the past year?	☐	☐	Do they ever try to choke/strangle you or cut off your breathing? (If yes, have they done it more than once, or did it make you pass out, black out or dizzy?)	☐	☐	Have you ever been beaten by them while you were pregnant? (If you have never been pregnant by them, skip this question.)
☐	☐	Do they own a gun?	☐	☐	Do they use illegal drugs? (Such as "uppers" or amphetamines, "meth", speed, angel dust, cocaine, "crack", street drugs or mixtures.)	☐	☐	Have they ever threatened or tried to commit suicide?
☐	☐	Have you left them after living together during the past year? (If you never lived with them skip this question)	☐	☐	Are they an alcoholic or problem drinker?	☐	☐	Do they threaten to harm your children?
☐	☐	Are they unemployed?	☐	☐	Do they control, or attempt to control, most or all of your daily activities? (For instance: do they tell you who you can be friends with, when you can see your family, how much money you can use, or when you can take the car?)	☐	☐	Do you believe they are capable of killing you?
☐	☐	Have they ever used a weapon against you or threatened you with a lethal weapon?	☐	☐	Are they violent and constantly jealous of you? (For instance, do they say, "If I can't have you, no one can.")	☐	☐	Do they follow or spy on you, leave you threatening notes or messages, destroy your property, or call you when you don't want them to?
☐	☐	If yes to the former question, was the weapon a gun?	☐	☐				Have you ever threatened or tried to commit suicide?
☐	☐	Do they threaten to kill you?						
☐	☐	Have they avoided being arrested for domestic violence?						
☐	☐	Do you have children that are not theirs?						
☐	☐	Have they ever forced you to have sex when you did not want to do so?						

After completing this assessment, if you are concerned, please contact the Family Justice Center. Our case managers are ready to help. **916-875-HOPE**
*We also have assessments for male victims and same sex couples.

I See You. You are Not Alone

Paula (a pseudonym) is a career professional who works and lives in Sacramento County. She is the mother of a small child, and a recent survivor of physical, verbal and emotional abuse by her now ex-husband.

By Paula

Dear Friend,

You might not know what's going on, but I do. I've been there. Your partner was wonderful at the beginning. Everyone marveled about what a great couple you were. Your story might be different than mine, but I can tell you what will happen if you don't leave. He'll get worse. You know it. I know it. Here's what I did to prepare to leave. You can, too. I love you.

- **Every time he does something awful, write it down.** Keep it in a safe place. When he starts telling you he didn't do or say what he did, go back and read it. Remind yourself you're not crazy. Read it when he's nice. Don't let yourself block out the bad things he did.
- **Imagine your children doing what he's doing to you.** Imagine them doing it to a partner. I always imagined my son calling his loved one a "f***ing bitch" when he was mad. It gave me the courage to leave.
- **Record the rages.** Text it to me or someone safe and delete it from your phone in case he looks at your phone. Don't upload it to your computer. He might see it. He might not ever hit you and that's okay. You're doing and saying what you need to do to stay safe. But the rages are not okay.
- **Write down the verbal abuse.** You will start to understand a pattern. My abuser said the same thing almost in the same order. It gave me my power back mentally. I began to understand that he was manipulating me. Eventually, every time he said it, it hurt less. And I got more determined to leave.
- **Get copies of your children's birth certificates and records, and keep them at work.** This will reduce your anxiety when he rages. You'll know that, if he gets really bad, you have the paperwork to prove to the police that your children are yours. No police ever asked me to show a birth certificate, but it helped calm me. Do this before he puts a tracking device on your car.
- **If he has a tracking device on your car already, call the Sacramento Family Justice Center and ask them what to do.**
- **Don't go to any of HIS friends or family for help.** They will turn on you once it's clear the custody of the children is involved. Don't underestimate his ability to convince his friends and family that you're crazy. It's very likely he's been telling them for years now that you're unstable. I made that mistake. I didn't understand that people would lie in court so that they could continue to see my child.
- **You will need therapy.** A lot of it. You might not understand for a year or more how this happened. You might have PTSD and anxiety. Take the meds the therapist recommends. You need to regain equilibrium. I'm here to support you.
- **Have you been perfect? Absolutely not.** Have you returned the rage? Very likely. Rage breeds rage. Sometimes you raged just to get him to blow his top, so you could just get it over with. You are not the abuser. See #1.
- **Warning him that you will leave will likely cause him to escalate.** Only you understand how bad he will get if you warn him. You are the expert. Nobody else.
- **When he gets quiet, get very scared. Quiet is not good.** Quiet is frightening. Quiet means it's time to go. Now. Take your children and go.
- **If you need me to call the police, text me "911"** and I will call them. Hide in the closet with your children. The police will come. Do not stay once the police come. Whatever you do, do not stay.

Love,
Paula

Escaping Violence

The Family Justice Center can help devise a safe exit strategy

by Zoe Manzanetti

Domestic violence situations are scary and can be extremely complex, but the Sacramento County Regional Family Justice Center (FJC) helps victims navigate through the trauma that can arise from leaving those environments. The FJC provides information, resources and support to people who have experienced sexual assault, human trafficking or other forms of violence. To provide opportunities for escape, staff at the FJC work with each client to draft a case-specific plan.

One client, Cristina, received help from the FJC and eventually escaped her domestic violence relationship. Cristina explains the most significant thing FJC provided her was support: "Because it is such a private matter, I didn't know where else to find support." She explains the FJC staff helped her develop a plan. "They continuously asked me, 'What are you going to do next?' Because when you're in these situations, you can't even think about [the next step]."

Dawn Morris, a case manager with the FJC, agrees that this plan for the victims' next steps is extremely important. "We talk about what happens during an incident and how to stay safe after the incident, which includes

asking: 'Where's a safe place you can go?'" The plan is so important because, as Morris explains, "The most dangerous time in a domestic violence relationship

can be when they leave that relationship." Morris also understands that each situation is complex and unique: "We have a checklist but the plan has to be different, pertinent to [each victim's situation]."

Cristina had her own complexities that the FJC staff helped her maneuver. "They kind of prepared me for what was going to possibly

happen with the restraining order and the fact that I have children, and that my husband was living in my house." Part of Cristina's plan also included guidance on how to approach this difficult topic with her son which, she says, "was extremely helpful because I was just an emotional mess."

But the plan of escape doesn't just end once a victim is safe. "It's not like you're here and then you're gone. We are here," Morris says, "We just want victims to know they will have that continued support."

Whether it's immediate help in getting out of the situation or one of the many longer-term support systems the FJC offers its clients, Cristina advises, "Without a doubt, contact the Family Justice Center and they will walk you through every step of the way."

"The most dangerous time in a domestic violence relationship can be when they leave that relationship."

Dawn Morris
Case Manager,
Family Justice Center



Take Me With You!

Domestic Violence Agencies

Family Justice Center:
(916) 875-HOPE
WEAVE: (916) 920-2952
(24-hour support line)
My Sister's House:
(916) 428-3271
(24-hour multilingual help line)

Law Enforcement

For Emergencies: 9-1-1
Sacramento Sheriff:
(916) 874-5115
Sacramento Police:
(916) 264-5471
Your Local Law Enforcement Number:

Mental Health

Veterans Crisis Line:
1 (800) 273-8255 (Press #1)

WellSpace Suicide Prevention Line:
(916) 368-3111 (24-hour)

Safety Planning List

Items to gather and keep in a safe place when planning to leave an abusive situation:

ID for you and your children

- Photo ID/driver license, passports, birth certificates
- Social Security cards (or numbers)

Important Legal Documents

- Restraining order, custody orders, marriage license, immigration papers, etc.

Miscellaneous

- Address book
- Medications, medical insurance card, cash, credit cards
- Children's favorite toys and/or blankets

Other: _____

My Personalized Safety Plan

The following steps represent my plan for increasing my safety:

If staying in the home:

- Install a security system if possible
- Teach children how to call 911
- Keep a copy of the restraining order with you
- Plan an escape route in case you need to leave in a hurry
- Create a "code" word for your children and/or friends to use as an alert to seek help or safety
- Install an outside motion light
- If you have an alarm on your car, keep the car keys by your bed at night so you can sound alarm for help
- Call 911 for emergency
- Name of a support person I can call: _____



Camp HOPE America lets kids be kids.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF SACRAMENTO REGIONAL FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER

Breaking the Family Cycle of Abuse

Children are learning all the time

by Zoe Manzanetti and Steve Caruso

In a home wracked with parental violence, children don't stop learning. A cruel cycle of violence is created when children watch one parent physically, emotionally or psychologically abuse the other.

Children are not merely innocent bystanders — they are lifelong victims who can perpetuate more victims.

Boys learn from violent fathers to be violent to women. In fact, a boy who sees his mother being abused is 10 times more likely as an adult to abuse his female partner. Girls learn to expect violence from seeing their mothers abused.

As a direct result of witnessing domestic violence, both boys and girls are more likely to carry deep emotional scars that have

dramatic effects as they grow into adults and beyond. These include depression, aggressive behavior, self-harm, PTSD, obesity, emotional distancing, and verbal, motor and cognitive issues. So, a sad cycle persists.

To help combat such a cycle, the FJC and Camp HOPE America partnered to create a summer camp for children who have witnessed abuse in their home.

Kids from throughout Northern California attend a week-long sleepaway camp that allows them to just be children. "Believe in yourself.

Believe in others. Believe in your dreams" — these are the words that are continually reinforced to the kids who attend Camp HOPE America.

Daniel Iritani, FJC's Development Director, explains that Camp HOPE America is a "camping and mentoring initiative for these children."

When the children are in these abuse situations, Iritani says, "they have to take on additional responsibilities that no six, seven, 10-year-old should or can take on." Camp HOPE America creates an opportunity for the children to shed these responsibilities and simply experience childhood.

"It's a no-contact camp so the parents can't call or check-in," Iritani adds. "Kids are just out there being kids, by themselves with their counselors."

Camp HOPE America aims to break the intergenerational cycle of violence. Building on the idea that children are statistically more likely to become abusers themselves, Camp HOPE America gives these children an opportunity to envision themselves in a different future.

"For many of them, they've never seen a life outside of an abusive household," Iritani says. "Camp HOPE America's goal is to create our own kind of positive cycle."

"[When kids are in abuse situations] they have to take on additional responsibilities that no six, seven, 10-year-old should or can take on."

Daniel Iritani,
Development Director

Get Here and We'll Take Care of the Rest

The Family Justice Center is a one-stop center for victims to receive comprehensive support for their needs all in one place, so they don't have to repeat their stories over and over again.

The Family Justice Center:

- **Connects victims and families with community organizations for long-term support, like:** therapists, WEAVE, My Sister's House, Lao Community Development Center, International Rescue Committee and more.
- **Provides emotional support throughout the process:** There are peer counseling sessions, legal assistance, support groups and court accompaniment.
- **Creates individualized safety plans.**
- **Support and education for non-offending caregivers, family members and friends:** The FJC encourages family and friends to come to the FJC to seek support for themselves and learn about the dynamics of domestic violence and how we can help.
- **Provides transportation.**
- **All services are free and provided on a walk-in basis. No appointments needed.**





**Sacramento Regional
Family Justice Center**

3701 Power Inn Road,
Suite 3100

Sacramento, CA 95826

916-875-HOPE

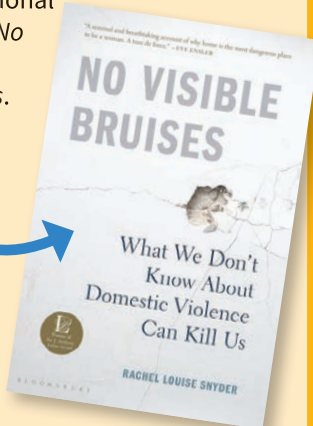
www.HopeThrivesHere.org

Recommended Reading

“If you think domestic violence is a problem for the unlucky few, you don’t know how it intersects with mass shootings, homelessness, poverty, inequality, mental illness, addiction, mass incarceration, and nearly every major social ill this country faces. Oh. It also costs you money. Lots and lots of money.”

Rachel Louise Snyder

To learn more about the epidemic of domestic violence, read this exceptional book, *No Visible Bruises*.



We're Here to Help!



**Sacramento Regional Family
Justice Center** provides

comprehensive services to those impacted by domestic violence, elder abuse, human trafficking, sexual assault and child abuse. Services include case management, legal assistance, and individual and group counseling. Sacramento Regional Family Justice Center is dedicated to restoring hope and safety to those who need and deserve it the most.

And we appreciate your support as well.



Volunteers are always welcome. From attorneys who assist with restraining order petitions to those who will greet and comfort our victims to those who love to bake and can provide refreshments, we welcome your gifts of time and talent.



Financial gifts: All of our services are free, but we can only offer this because of the generosity of individuals, businesses, foundations and municipalities who support our work. We're a 501(c)3 nonprofit so gifts are tax-deductible.



Please visit our website at **www.HopeThrivesHere.org** for more information. If you would like to schedule a tour, please contact our office at **916-875-HOPE**.