
Girl Scouts of Central Maryland

Important Issues:
**Learning about Domestic
Violence**



Girl Scouts of Central Maryland
4806 Seton Drive
Baltimore, Maryland 21215
410.358.9711; 800.492.2521
www.gscm.org

04-1131
12/08

A Brief Overview of the IMPORTANT ISSUES Patch

This booklet is intended to help girls learn about domestic violence in an age appropriate non-threatening way. Education and awareness are powerful tools in reducing and the eventual elimination of the incidences of domestic violence.

Domestic Violence affects us all in ways we may not be aware. Studies show that in 50 - 70 % of cases where one parent is violent/abusive to another parent, the children are also physically abused. When domestic violence occurs in the family children are frequently absent from school which can cause them to fall behind in their school work, something which they may never be able to catch up. Girls whose families are involved in domestic violence very often become withdrawn and cry easily, they may also have few friends causing them to become further isolated. Boys who live in families with domestic violence may have a difficult time controlling their anger and can lash out at the people around them; some may even be cruel to their pets. Many adult offenders witnessed domestic violence as children.

Learn about the True and False of Domestic Violence and Five ways to fight it before starting the patch requirement activities. *Leaders can either discuss this as a group or make copies for the girls to fill out on their own and then discuss the answers as a group. Answers are in the back of the booklet.*

The True and False of Domestic Violence circle your answer

- | | | |
|--|------|-------|
| 1. Victims of domestic violence like to be beaten. | True | False |
| 2. Victims of domestic violence have emotional or mental problems. | True | False |
| 3. People with low self-esteem get involved in violent relationships. | True | False |
| 4. People who are victims of violence never leave the situation. | True | False |
| 5. People are violent to their family because of drug and alcohol abuse. | True | False |
| 6. People are violent to their family because of stress or unemployment. | True | False |
| 7. Nothing police officers, lawyers, or the courts do work. | True | False |
| 8. People who are violent to their family can still be a good parent. | True | False |
| 9. Children are not affected when there is violence in their family. | True | False |

Answers found in back of this packet

Five ways to Fight Domestic Violence

- 1) Know what Domestic Violence Is: Most victims of domestic violence are women. Children who witness domestic violence are also victims. Any adult in a family who uses physical violence, threats, emotional abuse, harassment or stalking to control the behavior of anyone in their family are committing domestic violence.
- 2) Develop A Safety Plan: This is a plan to be safe when domestic violence happens, such as how to get out of the house quickly, somewhere safe to go, important emergency telephone numbers, spare set of keys, or emergency money.
- 3) Call 911: Domestic violence is a crime, not a "private family matter" no one should be afraid to ask for immediate help.
- 4) Exercise Your Legal Rights: Anyone experiencing domestic violence has the right to go to the police and court to protect themselves and their family.
- 5) Get Help for the Family So That the Violence Will Stop: There are many services available to help people with domestic violence. Look in the phone book for the state or local domestic violence crisis hotline for help.

DAISY (Complete four activities)

*Invite a speaker to your troop/group from a local domestic violence program to speak at your meeting. Have them discuss what domestic violence is and how to prevent it. Ask what the options are if you know someone is being abused.

Become a part of the *clothesline project*. This project lets women who were victims of domestic violence design a T-shirt depicting their experience. Have girls design their own T-shirt or cut butcher paper in the shape of a T-shirt depicting ways to STOP domestic violence. Hang all the T-shirts on a clothesline to display.

Divide the troop/group into teams and play charades using emotions such as anger, happiness, fear, frustration, boredom, joy etc. Each team takes turns acting the words and then guessing.

Read a book or watch a video designed for children on domestic violence. Your local library should be able to help.

Do a service project to benefit victims of domestic violence or a local shelter. Collecting toiletry items, underwear, and socks for women and children is always appreciated. Check with the agency first.

Think of some problems that might occur when people are angry. Have girls find other things to do when angry besides yelling or hurting someone.

BROWNIE (Complete five activities)

*Invite a speaker to your troop/group from a local domestic violence program to speak at your meeting. Have them discuss what domestic violence is and how to prevent it. Ask what the options are if you know someone is being abused.

Become a part of the *clothesline project*. This project lets women who were victims of domestic violence design a T-shirt depicting their experience. Have girls design their own T-shirt or cut butcher paper in the shape of a T-shirt depicting ways to STOP domestic violence. Hang all the T-shirts on a clothesline to display.

Divide the troop/group into teams and play charades using emotions such as anger, happiness, fear, frustration, boredom, joy etc. Each team takes turns acting the words and then guessing.

Read a book or watch a video designed for children on domestic violence. Your local library should be able to help.

Do a service project to benefit victims of domestic violence or a local shelter. Collecting toiletry items, underwear, and socks for women and children is always appreciated. Check with the agency first.

Think of some problems that might occur when people are angry. Have girls find other things to do when angry besides yelling or hurting someone.

Obtain or draw a map of your community and locate "safe places". Some examples of safe places are schools, stores, libraries, places of worship. Can you think of any others?

JUNIOR (Complete six activities)

*Invite a speaker to your troop/group from a local domestic violence program to speak at your meeting. Have them discuss what domestic violence is and how to prevent it. Ask what the options are if you know someone is being abused.

Become a part of the *clothesline project*. This project lets women who were victims of domestic violence design a T-shirt depicting their experience. Have girls design their own T-shirt or cut butcher paper in the shape of a T-shirt depicting ways to STOP domestic violence. Hang all the T-shirts on a clothesline to display.

Have the girls role play situations where they are being yelled, hit, harassed, or stalked by someone ask the girls how they could safely handle that situation.

Read a book or watch a video on domestic violence. Your local library should be able to help.

Do a service project to benefit victims of domestic violence or a local shelter. Collecting personal care items, magazines, and "fun" things for children is always appreciated. Check with the agency first.

Think of some problems that might occur when people are angry. Have girls find other ways to deal with anger besides yelling or hurting someone.

Obtain or draw a map of your community and locate "safe places". Some examples of safe places are schools, stores, libraries, places of worship. Can you think of any others?

Clip newspaper or magazine articles about domestic violence and share it with your troop/group.

In your troop/group discuss how you could help a friend that tells you she was/is being abused.

CADETTE and SENIORS and AMBASSADORS (Complete eight activities)

*Invite a speaker to your troop/group from a local domestic violence program to speak at your meeting. Have them discuss what domestic violence is and how to prevent it. Ask what the options are if you know someone is being abused.

Become a part of the *clothesline project*. This project lets women who were victims of domestic violence design a T-shirt depicting their experience. Design your own T-shirt depicting ways to STOP domestic violence. Hang all the T-shirts on a clothesline to display.

Role-play situations where you are being yelled at, hit, harassed, or stalked by someone. Have the troop/group brainstorm how they could safely handle that situation.

Read a book or watch a video on domestic violence. Your local library should be able to help. Have a discussion with your troop/group on what happened.

Do a service project to benefit victims of domestic violence or a local shelter. Collecting personal care items, magazines, and "fun" things for children is always appreciated. Check with the agency first.

Obtain or draw a map of your community and locate "safe places". Some examples of safe places are schools, stores, libraries, places of worship. Can you think of any others?

Clip newspaper or magazine articles about domestic violence and share it with your troop/group.

In your troop/group discuss how you could help a friend that confides in you that she was/is being abused.

Read the "What is Dating Violence" and the "Dating Bill of Rights" information sheets. Also read the information on the new Peace Order for at www.protectiveorder.org.

If something suspicious happened and you needed to file a police report, what would you say? What facts would you need? What happened, when did it happen, who was involved, what did they look like? Could you describe that person?

Local Resources:

Domestic Violence Center of Howard Co
5457 Twin Knolls Road, Suite 310
Columbia, MD 21045
Phone: 410-997-0304
Fax: 410-997-1397
www.dvcenter.org

MD Network Against Domestic Violence
6911 Laurel-Bowie Road, Suite 309
Bowie, MD 20715
301-352-4574
Fax: 301-809-0422
www.mnadv.org/

YWCA Domestic Violence Service
1517 Ritchie Highway
Arnold, MD 21012
410-626-7800
Fax: 410-626-7312
www.ywca.org/site/pp.asp?c=ktJ2JbMLIqE&b=993149

National Resources:

American Bar Association
Commission on Domestic Violence
740 15th Street, NW
9th Floor
Washington, DC 20005-1022
202/662-1737/1744
Fax: 202/662-1594

National Domestic Violence Hotline
1-800-799-7233
www.ndvh.org

Domestic Violence .net
www.domestic-violence.net

Breaking the Cycle, Inc
www.breakingthecycleinc.com

Domestic Violence UPDATE
www.dvupdate.com

The True and False of Domestic Violence ANSWERS

1. Victims of domestic violence like to be beaten. False
Victims of domestic violence desperately want the abuse to end and will use survival strategies such as calling the police to protect themselves and their children.
2. Victims of domestic violence have emotional or mental problems. False
Most victims of domestic violence are not mentally ill although people with disabilities can also be victims of abuse. Some victims of domestic violence suffer from psychological effects such as post-traumatic stress disorder or depression.
3. People with low self-esteem get involved in violent relationships. False
There is little support for the theory that low self esteem causes victims to become involved in abusive relationships. A decrease in self-esteem as a result of being abused can occur.
4. People who are victims of violence never leave the situation. False
Most victims of domestic abuse leave their abusers, often several times. It may take many attempts to finally separate because abusers use violence and financial control to compel victims to return.
5. People are violent to their family because of drug and alcohol abuse. False
Drug and alcohol does not cause people to be abusive to their family although it is frequently used as an excuse.
6. People are violent to their family because of stress or unemployment. False
Stress and unemployment does not cause people to be abusive to their family, in fact domestic abuse cuts across all socioeconomic lines.
7. Nothing police officers, lawyers, or the courts do work. False
All of the above systems must work together to ensure effective protection and prosecution of domestic violence offenders. The community must let abusers know that domestic violence will not be tolerated.
8. People who are violent to their family can still be a good parent. False
Because children often suffer physical and emotional harm from living in a violent home, domestic violence is extremely relevant to the lack of good parenting.
9. Children are not affected when there is violence in their family. False
Children who witness domestic violence in their family suffer emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and developmental impairments as a result.

Resources used in the development of this patch project:

The commission on Domestic Violence, The United States Justice Department, Mineral County Task Force on Domestic Violence of West Virginia, Girl Scout Troop 47 of Shawnee Girl Scout Council, Inc, Domestic Violence Center of Howard Co. Inc, YWCA of Anne Arundel Co.



Girl Scouts of Central Maryland IMPORTANT ISSUES Report Form

Please complete and return to: Girl Scouts of Central Maryland, 4806 Seton Drive, Baltimore, MD 21215, **Attention: Program**

Date: _____

Troop/Group No. _____ Service Unit # _____

Groups: Leader's/ Advisor's Name: _____ Telephone # _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____ Email Address: _____

Individuals: Name: _____ Telephone # _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____ Email Address: _____

Age level (check): Brownie Junior Cadette Senior Ambassador

Number of Girls Participating in this patch packet: _____

Patches:

Patches are available at the council store.

Please contact store for prices and information: 410-358-9711, ext. 202

We would like to hear from you!

What did you like the most about this patch packet?

What did you like the least about this patch packet?

What would you change about this patch packet?

Do you have any comments/ suggestions?