

## EFFECTIVE WORKPLACE SERIES

### WORK-FAMILY INFORMATION ON: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

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#### WHY IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AN IMPORTANT WORKPLACE ISSUE?

"Domestic violence is a workplace issue because what happens in the home or in one's personal life follows a worker to the office. Furthermore, the workplace often represents either a safe place for the victim, or it's a place where the abuser knows he or she can locate their victim. Someone suffering from physical abuse is likely to call in sick, come in late, or be distracted from their work, increasing the workplace's health care costs and absenteeism as well as decreasing overall productivity. This is the impact that this supposed "private matter" has on the workplace."

Jane Randel, VP of Corporate Communication, Liz Claiborne Inc.

#### WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

"Domestic violence may include not only the intimate partner relationships of spousal, live-in partners and dating relationships, also familial, elder and child abuse may be present in a violent home. Abuse generally falls into one or more of the following categories: physical battering, sexual assault and emotional or psychological abuse, and generally escalates over a period of time" (National Coalition against Domestic Violence, 2005).

Sometimes the broader definition of intimate partner violence is used as "domestic" implies "married," while intimate partners could be living together or could be homosexual partners.

#### Want more related DEFINITIONS?

[http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic\\_extended.php?id=31&type=6](http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic_extended.php?id=31&type=6)

#### DID YOU KNOW?

- "Women victims of recent domestic violence had a 26% higher rate of absenteeism and tardiness than non-victims" (Reeves & O'Leary-Kelly, 2007).
- "One in five employed adults in the US are victims of domestic violence" (Corporate Alliance to End Partner Violence, 2005).
- "The annual cost of lost productivity due to domestic violence is estimated at \$727.8 million, with over 7.9 million paid workdays lost each year" (National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, 2003).

#### Want more STATISTICS or the full references for above statistics?

[http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic\\_extended.php?id=31&type=1](http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic_extended.php?id=31&type=1)

#### SIX STEPS FOR CREATING A SUCCESSFUL WORKPLACE PROGRAM TO ADDRESS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

- STEP 1: Organize a multidisciplinary team to oversee the process
- STEP 2: Develop a corporate policy addressing intimate partner violence
- STEP 3: Provide training – recognize, respond, and refer
- STEP 4: Build awareness through workplace communications
- STEP 5: Enlist employees' help to ensure a violence-free workplace
- STEP 6: Broaden communications to include the community, important stakeholders in the company's industry, and other organizations

Corporate Alliance to End Partner Violence. (n.d.) Six steps for creating a successful workplace program. Retrieved February 19, 2008, from: [http://www.caepv.org/membercenter/files/six\\_steps.pdf](http://www.caepv.org/membercenter/files/six_steps.pdf).

#### HOW DOES DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AFFECT YOUR ORGANIZATION?

- Lower productivity and reduced job performance
- Higher absenteeism rates
- Increased turnover
- Greater medical and mental health expenses
- Lost earnings
- Potential liability issues
- Negative impact on co-workers of victims
- Security concerns for victim of domestic violence and their co-workers



#### REPORTS WITH MORE INFORMATION

- Center for Prevention and Health Services. (2002). The impact of intimate partner violence on employee health and productivity. *Center for Prevention and Health Services Issue Brief*, 1(3), 1-12.
- Nesbit, R.J. (2006). Workplace intervention: Domestic violence is an issue that can't-and shouldn't-be left at home. *Employee Benefit News*, 20(10).
- Partnership for Prevention. (2002). *Domestic violence and the workplace*. Washington, D.C.: Partnership for Prevention.

#### Want more OVERVIEWS AND BRIEFS or the full references for the above reports?

[http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic\\_extended.php?id=31&type=7](http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic_extended.php?id=31&type=7)



#### SUGGESTED READINGS

- Randel, J.A., & Wells, K.K. (2003). Corporate approaches to reducing intimate partner violence through workplace initiatives. *Clinics in Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, 3, 821-841.
- Reeves, C., & O'Leary-Kelly, A.M. (2007). The effects and costs of intimate partner violence for work organizations. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 22(3), 327-344.
- Rothman, E., Stidsen, A., Hathaway, J., & de Vries, H. (2007). How employment helps female victims of intimate partner violence: A qualitative study. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 12(2), 136-143.
- Swanberg, J.E., Logan, T.K., & Macke, C. (2005). Intimate partner violence, employment, and the workplace: Consequences and future directions. *Trauma, Violence & Abuse*, 4(10), 1-26.

#### Want more READINGS?

[http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic\\_extended.php?id=31&type=2&linktype=suggested](http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic_extended.php?id=31&type=2&linktype=suggested)

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To visit the Domestic Violence Topic Page, go to <http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic.php?id=31>