

BEHAVIORAL CHARACTERISTICS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

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BATTERERS	BATTERED MATES	CHILDREN
Batterers are found in all socioeconomic, educational, ethnic, racial and age groups.	Battered mates are found in all socioeconomic, educational, ethnic, racial and age groups.	Children are found in all socioeconomic, educational, ethnic, racial and age groups.
...use psychological, verbal and physical abuse, including sexual abuse.	...are psychologically, verbally and physically abused. Are frequently sexually abused.	...are psychologically abused and may be verbally, physically and sexually abused.
...engage in excessive minimization and denial.	...engage in excessive minimization and denial.	...engage in excessive minimization and denial.
The batterer is characterized by	The battered mate is characterized by	Children in violent homes are characterized by
...poor impulse control—limited tolerance for frustration, explosive temper—rage. Constantly demonstrating, but often successfully masking, anger.	...long-suffering, martyrlike endurance of frustration, passive acceptance, internalizing anger.	...a combination of limited tolerance for frustration, poor impulse control and martyrlike long-suffering—they externalize/internalize anger.
...stress disorders and psychosomatic complaints: sophistication of symptoms and success at masking dysfunction vary with social and educational levels.	...stress disorders and psychosomatic complaints.	...sadness, depression, stress disorders and psychosomatic complaints: absences from school, pre-delinquent and delinquent behaviour.
...emotional dependency—subject to secret depressions known only to family.	...economic and emotional dependency, subject to depression, high risk for secret drugs and alcohol, home accidents.	...economic and emotional dependency, high risk for alcohol/drugs, sexual acting out, running away, isolation, loneliness and fear.
...limited capacity for delayed reinforcement—very "now" oriented.	...unlimited patience for discovery of "magic combination" in solving marital and abusive problems—"travels miles" on tiny bits of reinforcement.	...combination of poor impulse control and continual hopefulness that situation will improve.
...insatiable ego needs and qualities of childlike narcissism (not generally detectable to people outside family group).	...being unsure of own ego needs, defining self in terms of partner, children, family, job.	...very shaky definition of self—grappling with childlike responses of parents for modeling; poor definition of self and/or defines self in parenting role (role reversal).
...low self-esteem; perceived unachieved ideals and goals for self, disappointment in career, even if successful by others' standards.	...low self-esteem, continued faith and hope that battering mate will get "lucky" break.	...low self-esteem, seeing self and siblings with few options or expectations to succeed.
...qualities which suggest great potential for change and improvement; i.e., makes frequent "promises" for the future.	...unrealistic hope that change is imminent, belief in "promises."	...mixture of hope/depression that there is no way out; peer group can be most important contact, if available.

...perception of self as having poor social skills; describing relationship with mate as closest ever known; remaining in contact with own family.	...gradually increasing social isolation including loss of contact with own family and friends.	...increased social isolation, increased peer isolation or complete identification with peers. Poor social skills.
...accusations against mate, jealousy, voicing great fear of abandonment or "being cheated on," possessive, controlling, hovering.	...inability to convince partner of loyalty, futilely guarding against accusations of "seductive" behavior toward others; compliant, helpless and powerless.	...bargaining behavior with parents; attempts to prove self; compliant, but may run away. Feelings of powerlessness.
...tearfulness that partner and/or children will abandon, fear of being alone.	...constant fear. which gradually becomes cumulative and oppressive with time.	...constant fear and terror for their life as well as parents'; confusion and insecurity.
...containment of mate and employment of espionage tactics against her (e.g., checks mileage/times errands); cleverness depends on level of sophistication.	...helplessly allowing containment or confinement/restriction by mate mistakenly interpreted as sign that partner "cares."	...increasing deceptiveness: lying, excuses for outings, stealing, cheating.
...violating others' personal boundaries; accepts no blame for failures (marital, familial, or occupational) or for violent acts.	...gradually losing sight of personal boundaries for self and children (unable to assess danger accurately), accepts all blame.	...poor definition of personal boundaries, violation of others' personal boundaries, accepting blame or projecting blame.
...belief that forcible behavior is aimed at securing the family nucleus ("for the good of the family").	...belief that transient acceptance of violent behavior will ultimately lead to long term resolution of family problems.	...little or no understanding of the dynamics of violence; often assumes violence to be the norm.
...absence of guilt on an emotional level even after intellectual recognition.	...emotional acceptance of guilt for mate's behavior, thinking mate "can't help it," considering own behavior as provocative.	...self-blame (depending on age) for family feuding, separations, divorce, & internal conflicts.
...generational history of abuse.	...generational history of witnessing abuse in family and/or being abused.	...continuation of abuse pattern in adult life.
...frequently participating in pecking order battering.	...occasionally participating in pecking order battering.	...frequently participating in pecking order battering (maim, kill animals, batter siblings): batters parents in later years.
...assaultive skills which improve with age and experience (increase in danger potential and lethality risks to family members over time).	..."creative" behavior which either diverts or precipitates mate's violence; but level of carelessness increases (judgment of lethality potential deteriorates) over time.	...poor problem-solving skills: may use violence as problem-solving technique in school, with peers, with family (appears as early as pre-school) demonstrates aggression or passivity.
...demanding and oftentimes assaultive role in sexual activities: sometimes punishes w/abstinence, at times experiences impotence.	...poor sexual self-image, assuming that role is total acceptance of partner's sexual behavior. Attempts at abstinence result in further abuse.	...poor sexual image, uncertainty about appropriate behavior, confused model identification, immaturity in peer relationships.
...increasingly assaultive behavior when mate is pregnant—pregnancy often marks the first assault.	...being at high risk for assaults during pregnancy.	...being at higher risk for assaults (either as witnesses or victims) during mother's pregnancy.

...exerting control over mate by threatening homicide and/or suicide...often attempts one or both when partners separate—known to complete either or both.	...frequent contemplation of suicide—history of minor attempts, occasionally completing suicide or becoming a homicide victim, frequently wishing partner dead. Occasionally completes homicide in self-defense.	...heightened suicide risks and attempts—increased thoughts of suicide and/or murdering parents, prone to negligence and carelessness.
...frequently using children as "pawns" and exerting power and control through custody issues.. ..may kidnap children or hold them hostage.	...feeling powerless in custody issues, living in fear children will be "kidnapped," struggling to maintain rights of children.	...feeling used and powerless in all decisions (age specific) regarding custody issues.