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## **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN THE UNITED STATES**

Domestic violence is a form of violence that occurs within a domestic relationship. Although domestic violence often occurs between partners in the context of an intimate relationship, it may also describe other household violence, such as violence against a child, by a child against a parent or violence between siblings in the same household. It is recognized as an important social problem by governmental and non-governmental agencies, and various Violence Against Women Acts have been passed by the US Congress in an attempt to stem this tide. Victimization from domestic violence transcends the boundaries of gender and sexual orientation. Women are more often the victims of domestic violence, and are more likely than men to suffer injuries or health consequences as a result of the incidents, but men are also subject to domestic violence in significant numbers. Significant percentages of LGBT couples also face domestic violence issues. Social and economically disadvantaged groups in the US regularly face worse rates of domestic violence than other groups. For example, about 60% of Native American women are physically assaulted in their lifetime by a partner or spouse. Domestic violence may include verbal, emotional, economic, physical and sexual abuse. All forms of domestic abuse have one purpose: to gain and maintain control over the victim. Abusers use many tactics to exert power over their partner: domination, humiliation, isolation, threats, intimidation, denial and blame. It is estimated that more than ten million people experience domestic violence in the US each year. Several studies in the US have found that domestic violence is more common in the families of police officers than in the general population. The prevalence of domestic violence in law enforcement is important to know, as police attitudes toward domestic violence affect the quality of police intervention in it. Many studies of the problem have stated that domestic violence is often part of a dynamic of control and oppression in relationships, regularly involving multiple forms of physical and non-physical abuse taking place concurrently. Intimate terrorism is an ongoing, complicated use of control, power and abuse in which one person tries to assert systematic control over another psychologically. Homeless shelters exist in many states as well as special hotlines for people to call for immediate assistance.

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