

**Northeastern University  
Police Department**

# **Domestic Violence**

**Awareness & Prevention Seminar**

# Domestic Violence Awareness & Prevention Seminar

## Topics of Discussion

- ❑ **Definition of domestic violence**
- ❑ **Defining the abuser**
- ❑ **Knowing your legal rights**
  - Massachusetts legislation
  - How to obtain a restraining order
  - What to do if the order is violated

# Domestic Violence Seminar

- ❑ **Intervention in domestic violence**
- ❑ **Reporting abuse**
  - How to report abuse
  - Exceptions to autonomy
- ❑ **Leaving an abusive relationship**
- ❑ **Resources available: on & off campus**
- ❑ **Referrals for the abuser**

# Domestic Violence

Definition

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# Definition of Domestic Violence

A pattern of coercive control found in any of the following forms:

- Physical
- Sexual
- Emotional
- Economic

# Definition of Domestic Violence

Relationship abuse occurs in all groups:

- Racial
- Ethnic
- Religious
- Age
- Socio-economic
- Heterosexual & same-sex relationships

# Defining the Abuser



# Defining the Abuser

An abuser may be a:

- Roommate
- Household member or former member
- Spouse or former spouse

# Defining the Abuser

An abuser may be a:

- Blood relative or minor child
- Parent of your minor child
- Current or former dating partner

# Defining the Abuser

**A person who has:**

- ❑ Physically harmed you**
- ❑ Placed you in fear of imminent serious physical harm**
- ❑ Caused you to engage involuntarily in sexual relations by force, threats or duress**

# Domestic Violence

Knowing Your Rights



# Massachusetts Legislation

## Abuse Prevention Law, Chapter 209A

- ❑ Enacted to protect against abuse
- ❑ Allows Courts to issue protection orders to stop abuse

# Massachusetts Legislation

- ❑ Commonly referred to as a Restraining Order
- ❑ Police are responsible for enforcement

# How to Obtain A Restraining Order

Making the  
Decision to File

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# How To Obtain An Order

- ❑ Contact University Police who will have a specially trained officer explain the procedure and guide you through the process
- ❑ Complete an application for a “Complaint for Protection from Abuse”
- ❑ This leads to a Civil complaint, not criminal charges against the abuser

# Steps to Obtain a Restraining Order

- ❑ Explain in the application why you need protection from the court
- ❑ University Police will escort you to court to meet with a Judge who will hear your request and decide whether to grant a Temporary Restraining Order mandating the abuser not to have any contact with you for 10 days
- ❑ If granted, the Police will attempt to locate the abuser to serve the stay-away order

# Steps to Obtain A Restraining Order

- ❑ You will be required to return to court in 10 days for a hearing to determine if the order should be extended
- ❑ Judge decides on extension up to one year based on testimony and evidence by you, the police in certain circumstances and the abuser
- ❑ You must appear at the hearing or the Temporary Restraining Order will be dismissed

# How to Obtain An Emergency Restraining Order

- ❑ Get to a safe place
- ❑ Contact the University Police, who will assist you in completing the application forms immediately
- ❑ If court is not in session the University Police will contact a special on-call judge who may grant an emergency order by phone
- ❑ Police will attempt to locate the abuser to serve the emergency order

# Emergency Restraining Orders

- ❑ Emergency orders are valid until the next court business day
- ❑ You must appear in court on the next court business day to request the order be extended for 10 days
- ❑ You must appear in court again in 10 days for the hearing at which you and the abuser will have an opportunity to speak with the judge, who will then decide whether to extend the order

# Restraining Order Violations

What To Do If the  
Order Is Violated



# If a Restraining Order is Violated

- ❑ Violation of the order is a crime
- ❑ Contact the police immediately – if the abuser can be located the abuser will usually be arrested
- ❑ If police cannot locate the abuser a criminal complaint can be filed in court and served on the abuser as soon as possible

# Reminders

- ❑ Keep a copy of the Restraining Order with you at all times
- ❑ Inform family, friends, neighbors, employers and other appropriate police agencies that you have a Restraining Order against an abuser

# Domestic Violence Intervention

Acknowledging  
The Abuse



# Domestic Violence Intervention Strategies for Family and Friends

- ❑ Tell the victim s/he is not alone
- ❑ Tell the victim s/he is not to blame for the abuse
- ❑ Assure that help is available, provide support
- ❑ Provide options; let her/him decide what to do

# Domestic Violence Intervention

- ❑ Determine risk for immediate and future danger
- ❑ Help develop a safety plan
- ❑ Review legal options
- ❑ Help determine what resources are available

# Reporting Abuse

What You Should  
Know About  
Confidentiality



# Reporting Abuse

- ❑ The victim decides who to tell about abuse. University Police do not reveal the identity of the victim
- ❑ Medical personnel in Massachusetts are **not** required to report cases of abuse to police or other state agencies
- ❑ The address and workplace of the victim can be kept confidential in court papers

# Confidentiality Exceptions

- ❑ Cases involving gunshot wounds, powder burns, or burns covering five percent or more of the body
- ❑ Adult age 60 or over
- ❑ Persons with disabilities
- ❑ Minor (child under age of 18)  
51A must be filed with DSS

# Confidentiality Exceptions (Cont'd)

- ❑ Minor (child under age of 18)

51A must be filed with Department of Social Services

- ❑ 51A

Mother is abusive

Mother returns to her abusive partner who is abusive to the child

Or the child has sustained injuries as a result of the mother's  
battering

# Leaving an Abusive Relationship

What You Need To Know



# Planning Ahead

- ❑ Have a safety plan in place
- ❑ Know in advance a safe place you can go
- ❑ Take with you important documents (driver's license, bank books, custody documents)
- ❑ Tell someone you trust – Let them help you make the first step

# It's Not Your Fault

- ❑ Get involved with a support group on campus or in your community
- ❑ Do not be embarrassed
- ❑ You are not alone and you are not at fault

# Resources Available

On Campus



# Resources Available On Campus

For advice, guidance or to seek emergency services:

- ☐ **Northeastern University Police Department**

Routine Business: 373-2121

Emergency: 373-3333

- ☐ **University Health and Counseling Services**

373-2772

# Resources Available On Campus

- ❑ University Police can arrange for immediate housing in a temporary “safe” room in a University Residence Hall
- ❑ Location of temporary “safe” rooms is confidential
- ❑ Temporary “safe” rooms are available for Northeastern University students who reside on or off campus

# Resources Available

Off Campus



# Resources Available Off Campus

- ❑ Your home town police

- ❑ Local Hospitals

  - Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center

  - Beth Israel Rape Crisis Intervention Program

  - Boston Medical Center

  - Brigham and Women's Hospital

  - Cambridge City Hospital

  - Massachusetts General Hospital

# Resources Available Off Campus

## ❑ Women's Shelters

Asian Shelter & Advocacy Program

Casa Myrna Vasquez

D.O.V.E.: Domestic Violence Ended

Elizabeth Stone House

Harbor Me

Renewal House

Respond

Transition House

Support Committee for Battered Women

# Resources Available Off Campus

- ❑ CPASA (Community Program Against Sexual Assault Servicing Women Multi-cultural/Bilingual)
- ❑ Fenway Community Health Center Servicing Gay Men and Women
- ❑ Network for Battered Lesbians
- ❑ Teen Dating Violence Intervention Projects

# Resources Available Off Campus

- 24 Hour Hotline numbers

Boston Area Rape Crisis Center at 617-492-7273

National 24 Hour Hotline at 1-800-799-7233 (SAFE)

# Resources Available Off Campus

- ❑ Referrals for Batterers

Emerge

Common Purpose

**“YOUR SAFETY IS OUR REWARD”**

**Northeastern University  
Police Department**

**Domestic Violence**

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