

ARE SUPPORT SYSTEMS EFFICIENT? HAVE SUPPORT SYSTEMS HELPED?

Most persons were aware of available help. Very few as little as 18 out of 88 abused men sought help while 80% of women sought help from formal institutions.

Some persons who sought help felt satisfied while others did not think they were sufficiently helped. Many cases are not pursued at court or followed up.

It was generally felt that law enforcers are not sufficiently sensitive to the issue.

WHAT DOES THIS IMPLY TO US AS DOMINICANS?

Everybody needs to play a role in eradicating this plague which can destroy the basic fabric of society through:

Improved gender relations at home, school and workplace

Gender Mainstreaming

Continued education/training and gender sensitisation

Forge Partnerships

Gender in the school curriculum, parenting and life skills

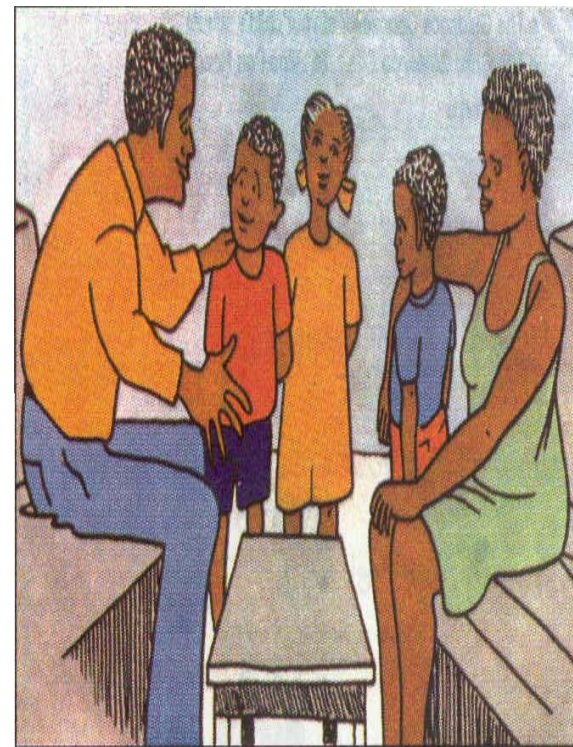
Improved support services

Economic empowerment of women

Male outreach programme

Mechanisms to enforce legislation

Church to play a greater role



SUMMARY FINDINGS OF RESEARCH ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN DOMINICA

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THE RESEARCH SOUGHT TO INVESTIGATE THE PROBLEM OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE BY ANSWERING THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- ✚ What is the incidence of domestic violence/intra familial violence in Dominica?
- ✚ What are the gender differentials between men and women's experiences of domestic violence?
- ✚ Are there generational differentials between the youth (18-34 yrs) experiences of Domestic Violence/Infra familial Violence and the 35+ age group
- ✚ Identify and evaluate institutional structures and operational procedures of the service provide/support system
- ✚ Identify and evaluate formal policies and practice
- ✚ Identify and evaluate laws/law enforcement as related to domestic violence/intra familial violence

The Research Study employed a combination of data collection methods, targeting various groups and involving several units of study.

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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE REPORTS

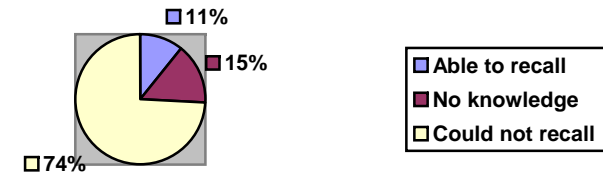
cases of police files and counselling records showed that both men and women seek assistance to deal with domestic violence but more women approach formal institutions. However an increase has been shown in number of men who seek counselling. Also shown was a high number of cases of domestic violence on records which seem to be on the increase and various forms of abuse reported.

look at
reported

DNCW	Women's Bureau	Police Department
April 98 – March 99	June 99 – June 01	Mid 99 to June 01
126 women 21 men	More than 340 DV cases (90% f victims)	459 cases

Semi structured interviews, focus group discussion and questionnaires administered to service providers of the various institutions involved with domestic violence.

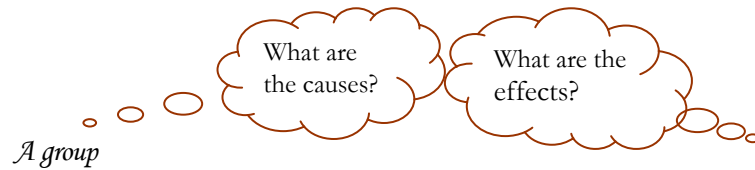
➤ Health Workers	➤ Social Workers	➤ Psychiatrists
➤ Counsellors	➤ Lawyers	➤ Police Officer



The following was indicated by service providers

- ☀ Both men and women are victims of abuse but women suffered more physical abuse
- ☀ The girl child more frequently victims of sexual abuse
- ☀ Men report less than women
- ☀ Many cases are not pursued at court due to several reasons or impediments but mostly because victims change their minds or are pressured to so do
- ☀ Insufficient training to effectively deal with the problem
- ☀ Lack of proper mechanisms in place to efficiently deal with domestic violence, even where legislation applies
- ☀ No specific legislation to deal with domestic violence (at the time Domestic Violence Act was not passed).
- ☀ The populace must be more involved in the fight against this problem

PERPETRATORS VIEWS



With some perpetrators/persons convicted at state prison for domestic violence or abuse provided insight as to the causes and consequences for violent behaviour, perpetrators views on the issues and their feelings and attitudes.

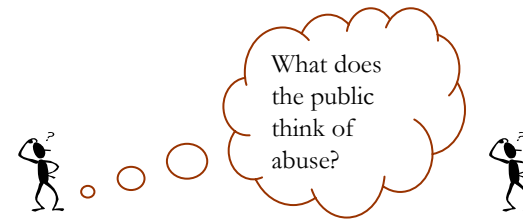
MAJOR RISK FACTORS

Financial Pblm	Lack of respect, love, trust
Poor communication	Lack of roles and responsibilities
Loss of control	Outside relationship/unfaithfulness
Deprivation of needs	Rejection or neglect

This group of perpetrators stated that they were now more sensitive to the issues. Among suggestions they made were:

- *Renewal of the mind, change in attitude and mentality especially by men*
- *Better family living better upbringing*
- *More jobs in community to provide for family*
- *Communications skills and conflict resolution*
- *Focus on Christian Life*
- *Increased education and counselling*

WHAT MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC HAD TO SAY?



More than 40% youth think that abuse is excusable, when provoked. A large proportion (more than 50%) of the families of respondents were evaluated as either lacking/poor in terms of family relations; that is deficient qualities for healthy family relations.

More than 75% of respondents both men and women, youth as well as adults are of the opinion that a woman's behaviour sometimes warrants a beating.

Different religious denominations and socio economic background revealed abusive relationships. However a higher percentage of persons of the lower socio-economic status reported abuse.

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MAJOR REASONS SUGGESTED OR INDICATED FOR ABUSIVE BEHAVIOUR INCLUDED:

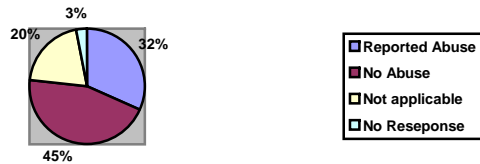
- ◆ *Substance abuse*
- ◆ *Outside relationship which was mainly revealed by women as the core of the problem*
- ◆ *Economic dependence especially women*
- ◆ *Poor communication*
- ◆ *Growing up in abusive home*
- ◆ *Lack of roles and responsibilities*

RESULTS FROM FIELD SURVEY ON "FAMILY RELATIONS IN DOMINICA"

IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE A GROWING CAUSE FOR CONCERN IN DOMINICA?

Here's the picture as indicated by 770 persons 362 men and 408 women from seven health districts in Dominica, through a Field Survey entitled "Family Relations in Dominica" as part of the research study.

PIE CHART SHOWING RESPONSE TO EXPERIENCE OF ABUSE IN RELATIONSHIP, AS REVEALED



- Domestic violence is widespread it occurs in all districts in Dominica with all but one district showing a percentage range of 20 to 46% of respondents who revealed abuse, at some point in time at home or in a relationship.

All forms of abuse were reported verbal, psychological/emotional, physical and sexual. Verbal abuse was most prevalent and more frequently suffered by men. Women suffered more physical abuse.

- 11.4 % men and 20.4% women interviewed revealed abuse in a current or previous relationship. Therefore 31% responded that they had experienced some form of abuse in previous or current relationship.

20% men and 21% women interviewed recalled their mother being abused especially by her partner and 11% both men and women recalled their father being abused.

The trend seems to continue since approximately 53% of 278 younger person of the sample (18-34 yrs) stated that their partner was sometimes abusive (31% female 21.6% males).

A Field Survey conducted in various district in Dominica indicated that:

- They were aware of the various forms of domestic abuse taking place within their communities
- That several persons remain in abusive relationships for various reasons
- They were aware of the impact this had on the family
- Were concerned that many of these cases were not pursued at Court
- Felt that the police and other social workers did not sufficiently follow-up on cases
- Believed that more needs to be done about the problem of domestic violence
- Made a number of suggestions to include:
 - Policy and legislation reform
 - Further Research
 - Public Education
 - Job opportunities
 - Better support services

All the above provided information to guide the Field Survey on "Family Relations in Dominica" conducted as the final part of the research study.