

When the Rapist is Her Partner

AN INTIMATE PARTNER SEXUAL VIOLENCE TRAINING WORKSHOP

QUICK IPSV TIPS FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ORGANIZATIONS

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- IPSV is not either sexual assault or domestic violence, it is “both/and” therefore BOTH SA and DV organisations must be prepared to respond. It can be harmful to assume that IPSV is just another form of domestic violence¹
- Abusive relationships are the most common setting for sexual assault²
- IPSV concurrent with physical violence has the potential to be more lethal than physical violence alone.³ Always ask about sexual assault, and recognise how the experience of sexual assault impacts on safety planning
- IPSV is a discrete form of abuse with different issues/impacts than other types of domestic violence. It is important for addressing even if there have been other abuses⁴
- Understand that women often don’t disclose IPSV, not because it didn’t happen, but because they’re ashamed, may not know that it was rape and because *nobody is asking*⁵
- Survivors of IPSV need validation that what happened to them is real rape/sexual assault and will be taken seriously. Use their terminology first and then reframe and say “what you have described is actually rape/sexual assault” OR “what you have described could be legally defined as rape/sexual assault”
- Refer to a sexual assault service, but in a supported way, not for example, saying “We don’t deal with that, you need to call a sexual assault service.” Recognize that it’s taken great courage for her to tell anybody in the first place
- Make some sexual assault training an integral part of domestic violence advocacy training and vice versa. “Regardless of which support agency is approached, the first door must be the right door for survivors of violence.”⁶
- Provide outreach – clearly name IPSV and invite survivors to seek help with your service.
- Include IPSV discussion in support groups⁷
- Include IPSV discussion in any Men’s Behavioural Change Program (MBCP)

¹ Bergen, R. K. (1996) *Wife Rape: Understanding the Response of Survivors and Service Providers*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

² Russell, D. (1990) *Rape in Marriage*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

³ Campbell, J.C. and Alford, P. (1989) "The dark consequences of marital rape." *American Journal of Nursing* 89, 946-949.

⁴ Bergen, R. K. (1996) *Wife Rape: Understanding the Response of Survivors and Service Providers*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

⁵ Finkelhor, D. & Yllo, K. (1985). *License to rape: Sexual abuse of wives*. New York: The Free Press.

⁶ Macleod, D. (2014), “Real Not Rare – Cross-training for sexual assault and Domestic Violence workers to understand, recognize and respond to intimate partner sexual violence”, in L. McOrmond-Plummer, P. Eastal, and J.Y. Levy-Peck (eds.) *Intimate Partner Sexual Violence A Multidisciplinary Guide to Improving Services and Support for Survivors of Rape and Abuse*, London, Jessica Kingsley Publishers,

⁷ Levy-Peck, J.Y. (2013) “Forming and Facilitating Support Groups for Survivors of IPSV” In L. McOrmond-Plummer, P. Eastal and JY Levy-Peck (eds.) *Intimate Partner Sexual Violence A Multidisciplinary Guide to Improving Services and Support for Survivors of Rape and Abuse*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers, UK.