

Is domestic violence a major public health problem?

By Heather Frankland
MPH Candidate
NMSU

Definition of Health

- “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity” (World Health Organization, 1948).

What is public health?

- “Public Health refers to the health status of a defined group of people and the governmental actions and conditions to promote, protect, and preserve their health” (MacKensie, 2005).

Is domestic violence a major public health issue?

- 3 million women in the U.S. physically injured each year
- Domestic violence during pregnancy is #1 cause of maternal mortality
- 7th leading cause of death for women, 1st leading cause for African Americans, 15-45 yrs of age
- Domestic violence injuries requiring medical attention is higher than the combination of rape, muggings, and accidents combined.
- Health problems: substance abuse, STDs, pelvic pain, gastrointestinal illnesses, depression, etc.

In the past. . .

- Traditionally seen as a criminal justice issue, of assigning blame, punishing the guilty party, and protecting the victim
- According to some advocates the best strategy would be for public health and the criminal justice to work together.

Small group activity

- Can violence be prevented? State reasons for why or why not.
- Imagine if domestic violence was treated as illness like polio or an addiction like smoking—would it decrease in occurrence?

If domestic violence was treated as a chronic illness....

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SPzVUGE3dds>

The stages of prevention

- Primary prevention: prevents it before it happens
- Secondary prevention: prevents it from progressing further, screens before it gets worse
- Tertiary prevention: after the fact, teaches patients ways to avoid a reoccurrence

Case Study

- Juana is in high school and is dating Matt. She was cautioned that he had a bad temper, but he has been nothing but sweet to her. He is a bit jealous and doesn't want her to hang out with her friends as well. He also doesn't want her to wear certain clothes. Sometimes he teases her to the point that it makes her uncomfortable.

What are the symptoms of domestic violence?

Primary prevention



Case Study

- Juana has been with Matt for a couple years now. He blows up at her at times. He ridicules her interests, tells her that she's just not smart enough to achieve her goals. He calls her a slut when she wants to wear different clothing than he picks out. Her family doesn't see much of her and worries. Once he punches her on her head. She is having headaches so she goes to the doctor.

How could domestic violence be screened?

Secondary prevention



Case Study

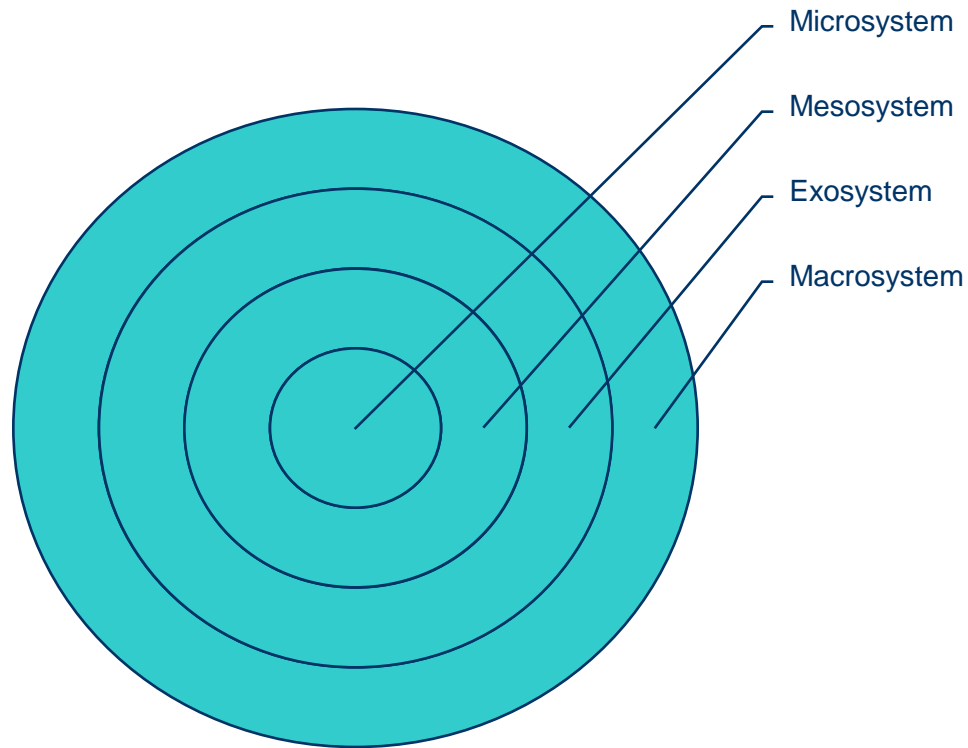
- Juana is pregnant. At first Matt was very excited at the news but now the violence has gotten worse. He insults her and punches her in front of the neighbors. Worse yet, he has made her fall a couple of times. She is afraid for her baby and is thinking about leaving Matt but she wants to stay since she loves him. One day her neighbors call the police on Matt. After that day his violence becomes even worse.

What can be done at this stage?

Tertiary prevention



Bronfenbrenner Ecological Systems Theory



Primary prevention efforts

- Recognizing individual risk factors
- Teachers addressing it in curriculum
- Creating community support
- Changing societal and cultural concept of domestic violence

Recommendations of the World report on violence and health

- Increase capacity for collecting data on violence.
- Research violence, causes, prevention...
- Promote primary prevention of violence.
- Promote gender and social equality and equity to prevent violence.
- Strengthen care and support services.
- Develop national plan of action.

Risk factors

- Exposure to violence as a child
- Attitudes about acceptance of violence
- Influence of peers

Methodology

- CDC measuring toolkit about violence-related attitudes among youth
 - Attitude and Belief
 - Psychological and Cognitive
 - Behavior
 - Environmental

Examples of the questions

- Attitude and belief: It makes you feel big and tough when you push someone around?
- Psychological and cognitive: Is it easy for you to understand other people's feelings?
- Behavior: How often have you threatened or forced someone to have sex?
- Environmental: How often has there been arguing in your household?

Secondary prevention efforts

- Doctors often see victims before domestic violence treatment advocates.
- Focus on asking about abuse, documenting it, pointing them to advocates, and discuss safety.
- Name ways that this could be done well and badly?
- Other professionals, screen?

RADAR

- Routinely screen female patients.
- Ask direct questions.
- Document your findings.
- Assess patient safety.
- Review options and referrals.

Case Study

- After Juana is counseled to leave the situation by a social worker. Matt goes to jail. She tries to leave seven times, and on the eighth time she finally leaves. Due to Matt's excessive abuse she had miscarried their child.
- Even though she left she is still afraid that he might show up anytime; she has headaches, nausea, and low self esteem.

Tertiary prevention

- What are examples of tertiary prevention?
- Name the pros and cons of tertiary prevention?

Thank you!



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