



You are not alone

Impact of Domestic/Intimate Partner Violence on the Workplace

May 2017

In addition to the abused person, domestic/intimate partner violence affects co-workers and the work environment. The effects can range from subtle to dramatic. As a supervisor or manager, it is important to be aware of potential problems.

"Domestic violence is absolutely a workplace issue. When [a partner leaves the] abuser, where is the one place the abuser knows the [partner] will be every day? Work."

- Cambridge Domestic Violence Advocate

Impact on abused person

- Negative physical and emotional health effects
- Isolation from friends and family
- Difficulty meeting basic needs of self and family
- Increased absenteeism, tardiness
- Decreased concentration
- Reduced productivity
- Workplace interruptions

Impact on co-workers

- Concern for the employee experiencing domestic/intimate partner violence
- Fear of violence entering the workplace
- Concern for personal safety
- Negative impact on workplace interpersonal relationships
- Work interruptions and decreased productivity
- Resentment towards the employee experiencing domestic/intimate partner violence (e.g. additional work falls on co-workers, perceived special treatment from supervisor/manager)
- Trauma from witnessing violence
- Negative impact on worker morale

Impact on organization

- Compromised safety in the organization
- Increased threat of violence
- Increased health care costs
- Increased employee turnover and recruitment costs
- Work interruptions and decreased productivity

Sources:

1. Cambridge Public Health Department. How to Respond to Employees Facing Domestic Violence: A Workplace Handbook for Managers, Supervisors, and Co-Workers. 2009.
2. Make It Our Business. Guidelines for communicating with employees at risk of workplace domestic violence. 2010.
http://makeitourbusiness.ca/sites/makeitourbusiness.ca/files/MIOB_Guidelines_Communicating_w-Employees.pdf