TBI AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: USING THE HELPPS SCREENING TOOL TO SUPPORT SURVIVORS

Presented at The Brain Injury Association of Pennsylvania’s Virtual Education Series
Objectives

After this presentation you should be able to:

- Recognize the connection between domestic violence and traumatic brain injury risk.
- Understand how the HELPPS Screening Tool is used to assist assessment of traumatic brain injury risk.
- Comfortably connect with local or state domestic violence support providers.
Self-Care

Make Time To Debrief!

Ask questions!

Check In With Yourself!

Take Breaks As Needed!
TBI and Domestic Violence

Making Connections
Domestic Violence

- Power and control
- Coercive behaviors/tactics
- Occurs in intimate and familial relationships
- Affects people of all ages, backgrounds, and identities
Methods of Control

**Physical**
Physical abuse is intentional but unwanted physical contact.

**Emotional**
Emotional abuse is controlling another person’s actions and behaviors through verbal and emotional manipulation.

**Sexual**
Sexual abuse is any type of unwanted sexual behavior or contact.
Methods of Control

Financial abuse is control of one’s ability to acquire, use and maintain money by an intimate partner.

Technological abuse is the use of things like texting and social networking to bully, harass, stalk or intimidate a partner.
Unique Patterns of Abuse

Tactics and patterns vary for each situation and often intersect...no two are the same.
Leaving An Abusive Person is VERY Dangerous

No one should ever be told to leave their abuser.

The most dangerous time for survivors is when they attempt to leave an abusive partner.
Supporting Domestic Violence Survivors

I’m sorry this is happening/has happened to you.

This is not your fault.

What can I do to help?

Talk about domestic violence programs.
Domestic violence programs can help **anyone** who is experiencing domestic violence, not just those seeking to end the relationship.
94% of domestic violence survivors report injuries to their face.

83% have been hit on the head and severely shaken.

At least 50% of survivors have experienced multiple TBIs.
Perpetrators of domestic violence cause head injury by:

- Hitting a survivor in the head with an object, hand or fist
- Pushing or shoving a survivor’s head into a wall, car, furniture, or other object
- Hurting a survivor’s jaw, teeth, eyes, and ears
- Shaking a survivor

(Iverson, Christina, & Pogoda, 2017)
While up to 68 percent of intimate partner violence survivors experience strangulation as method of violence, only about 20 percent disclose it...

Many do not associate strangulation with physical assault

Other injuries may seem more significant

No loss of consciousness

First responders/advocates do not ask
Remember!

PTSD and TBI can create conflicting symptoms that mimic severe mental health disorders, such as bi-polar and depression.

Survivors are at high risk for misdiagnosis as PTSD and TBI often co-occur.
Recognizing TBI in Survivors of IPV

- Difficulty concentrating
- Poor memory
- Communication problems
- Compromised executive functioning
- Trouble processing information
- Changes in personality
Screening for TBI

Domestic Violence Programs & The HELPPS Tool
Domestic Violence Programs in PA

Confidential  Free  Supportive  24/7 Hotline
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Services Offered By Programs May Include:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medical Accompaniment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Legal Assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling</td>
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Universal Screening

Screen every person at intake

Remove stigma through normalization

Identify more potential TBI and TBI risks

Education for all on TBI prevalence
TBI Screenings in Domestic Violence Programs

- Helps advocates work more effectively with survivors
- Creates space to offer resources about TBI providers
- Survivors may not be aware of TBI risk
Importance of TBI Screening

Undiagnosed TBIs compromise:

- Positive outcomes while receiving services.
- Effective rehabilitation.
- Fulfilling personal goals.
TBI HELPPS Screening is:

- Empathetic
- Inclusive
- Conducted within legal parameters
- Trauma-Informed
**HELPPS Screening Method**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hit</th>
<th>Have you ever hit your head or been hit in the head?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Room</td>
<td>Were you ever seen in the emergency room or hospitalized? If so, for what reason?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of Consciousness</td>
<td>Did you lose consciousness? For how long and for what reason?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems</td>
<td>Did you have any problems after you were hit on the head?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pregnancy</td>
<td>Is there any chance you may be pregnant?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sicknesses</td>
<td>Have you had any significant sicknesses after having hit your head?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A score of “2” or higher indicates the **potential** need for follow up services.
Pregnancy and Intimate Partner Violence

Intimate partner violence is the leading cause of death among pregnant and recently pregnant women.

Many survivors experience escalation of abuse during pregnancy

- Perceived loss of control
- Competition for attention

Abuse during pregnancy contributes to multiple health issues

- Pre-term delivery
- Low-birth weight
- High blood pressure
- Kidney infection-UTI
Next steps may include:

- TBI Supportive Case Management
- Referral to An Organization Like Yours
Connecting with Domestic Violence Programs

Collaboration and Referrals
Find Your Local Domestic Violence Program

Our help centers across the state provide free, confidential counseling, shelter, legal, and economic services for domestic violence victims and their children.

Find your closest Domestic Violence Program:

ENTER CITY OR ZIP

Use My Current Location

All Pennsylvania Domestic Violence Programs

Safety Notice
Use the “Safety Exit” button or press “Esc” for a safe and fast way to leave this site. If you are in danger, call 911 immediately.

About Browsing Safety
Benefits of Connection with a DV Program

Collaboration increases safety for your clients and theirs.

Increased understanding of one another’s roles.

Training and Education
Training and Education

Cross-training for each organization.

Co-facilitation for community learning.

Outreach efforts.
Increased Safety

Supportive, trauma-informed responses from TBI providers

TBI-informed responses from DV Programs
Increased Collaboration

- Understanding of services offered
- Circle of support for survivors
- Warm referrals become routine
Reaching out to a Domestic Violence Program

A phone call away!

Each program is different—this is a great time to schedule a meeting to learn about how you can work together!

Discuss what you heard in this training.

If you need help connecting—just let us know!
Resources

Brain Injury Helpline: 1-866-412-4755

Department of Health Head Injury Program webpage: https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/programs/Pages/Head-Injury.aspx

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) https://www.dli.pa.gov/Individuals/Disability-Services/ovr/Pages/default.aspx

National Resource Center for Traumatic Brain Injury http://www.tbinrc.com


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