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# **Domestic Violence and Sex Trafficking**

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# Domestic Violence & Sex Trafficking Defined

DV

Domestic violence relationships occur between family or household members and they are characterized by an unequal access to power wherein one member of the relationship maintains power and control over the other through the use of physical, verbal, and emotional abuse (Naylor, Petch, & Azam Ali, 2011).

ST

According to the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000, sex trafficking is defined as a situation “in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such an act has not attained 18 years of age”.

# Roles in Sex Trafficking

- Victim (can be male, female or transgender)
- Trafficker (or pimp)
- Buyer (John or Customer)
  
- Supporting roles
  - Hotels/Motels/Resorts
  - Credit card companies
  - Online facilitators

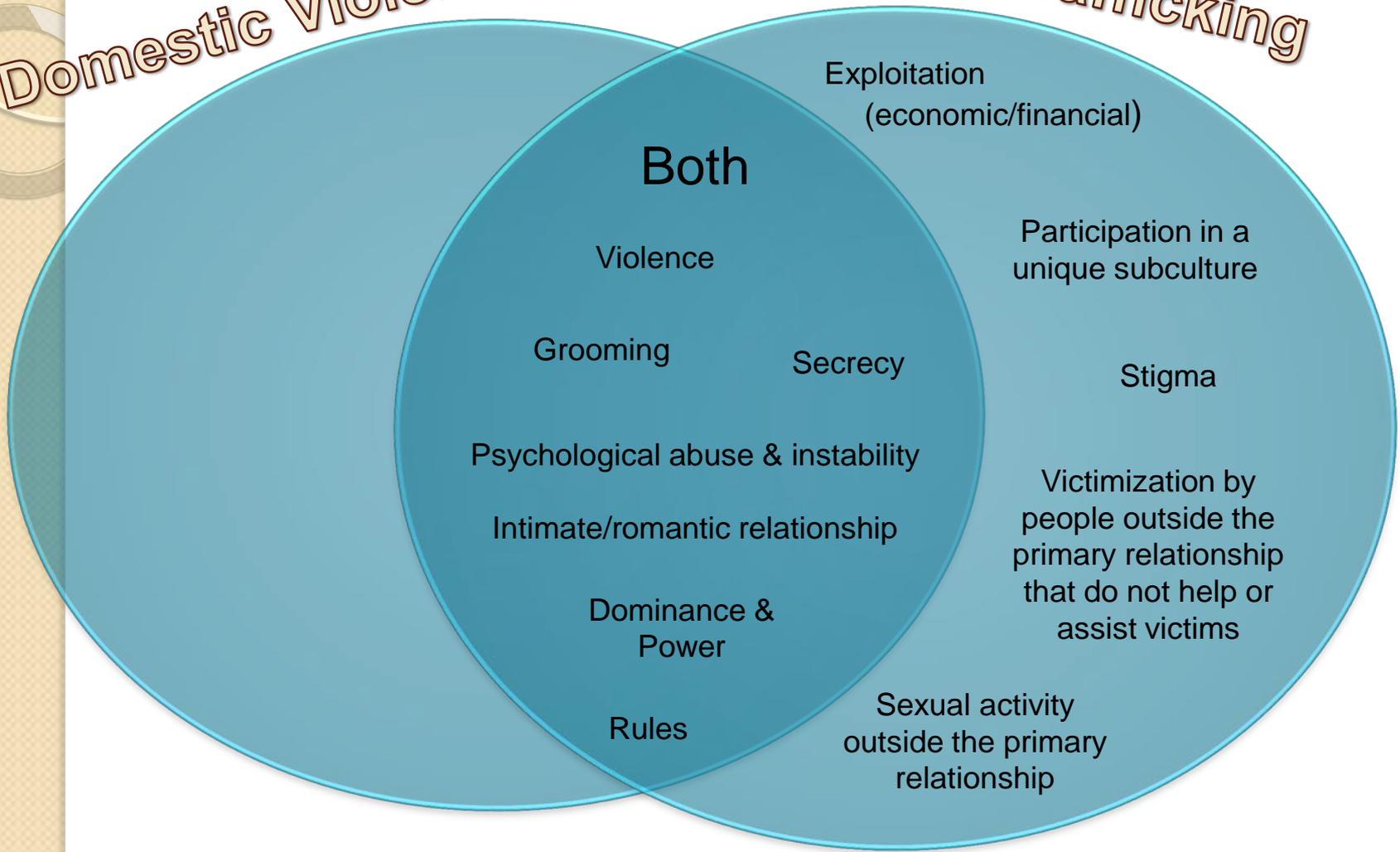
# Sexual Exploitation

Includes many types of victimization

- Sexual abuse/assault
- Violence or threats of violence
- Physical trauma
- Domestic violence

# Domestic Violence

# Sex Trafficking



# Risk Factors for Sexual Exploitation

- **Childhood abuse**
- **Parental alcohol and drug use**
- **Domestic violence, neglect, or abandonment**
- **Running away from home, homelessness and economic need/poverty**

*Sources: (Dalla, 2001; Dalla, 2003; Hardman, 1997; Nadon, Koverola, & Schludermann, 1998; Roe-Sepowitz, 2012; Simons and Whitbeck, 1991; Silbert & Pines, 1982)*

# Path into sex trafficking situations:

- Not one issue or problem but a combination
- Drugs
- Economic need
- Relationships (gangs, family involved)
- Community involvement
- May be different for males/transgender

# How do individuals become victims of sex trafficking?

1. Running away and living on the streets
2. “Romeo” pimps
3. “Gorilla” pimps
4. International or domestic major crime operations “circuits”
5. Gang-related prostitution
6. A parent or relative pimps their child
7. Curiosity, “fun” or “excitement”
8. Gay males: hustle market



*(Source: Roe-Sepowitz, 2010)*

# Negative Consequences

- **Physical health issues**
- Exposure related health issues
- Sexual activity related health issues
- Drug related health issues
- Violence related health issues  
(Dalla, 2003; Rafael & Shapiro, 2004; Sabella, 2012)
- **Mental health issues**
- PTSD
- Exacerbation of mental health problems due to exposure to trauma, limited resources/access to services.
- History of suicide attempts
- Anger/violence
- Dissociative disorders  
(Clarke, Clarke, Roe-Sepowitz, & Fey, 2012; Roe-Sepowitz, Hickle, & Cimeno, 2011)
- **Relationship issues**

# The Role of Relationships in sex trafficking situations

- Trafficker is often a boyfriend/friend/relative
- Types of traffickers differ:
  - Romeo pimp
  - Gorilla pimp
  - Other types
- Role of men who do not protect them
- Distortion of intimacy

## What to look for

- **Homelessness**
- **Chronic runaway**
- **History of abuse**
- **Travel with an older male**
- **Presence of an older boyfriend**
- **Multiple STI's**
- **Signs of violence**
- **Involvement in the system**
- **Tattoos or other branding marks**

## Terminology Unique to Sex Trafficking

- **“Game”**
- **Daddy/sugar daddy, boss, manager**
- **Call out/call in**
- **Dancer, escort**
- **Bottom girl**
- **Trick or date**

# Warning signs

## Tattoos vs. Brands



# Barriers to Treatment

- **Drug abuse/addiction**
- **Relationship challenges**
- **Rules of “the game”**
- **Economic need**
- **Motivation to change**
- **Prior traumatic experiences**
- **Fear**
- **Lack of self-worth, identity**
- **Limited future-focus**

# Experiences of Sex Trafficking Clients

- 2010-present
- 343 cases (Adults, Prostitution Diversion)
- 9 males/2 transgender/332 female (96.7%)

# Reported Experiences

- **Runaway before age 18: 186 (55.7%)**
- **Special ed classes: 86 (25.7%)**
- **Gang involved: 37 (11.1%)**
- **Physical abuse: 112 (32.6%)**
- **Hit by an object: 154 (46.5%)**
- **Emotional abuse: 87 (26.9%)**
- **Childhood sexual abuse:**
  - **Molested 128 (38.7%)**
  - **Rape 121 (36.7%)**
- **Social services involved: 122 (36.9%)**
- **Parents had drug/alcohol problem: 159 (48.2%)**
- **Started using drugs: average age 16 yrs old.**
- **Self harm: 87 (26.9%)**
- **Rape: 121 (36.7%)**
- **Drug and alcohol addiction: 118 (36.4%)**
- **Age first exchanged sex for money/other: average of 21.5 yrs.**

# Reported Domestic Violence

- Identified as “in an adult relationship, have you ever been hit, kicked or physically assaulted by a partner or spouse.”
  - **219 (66.2%)**

# Pathways Out of Sex Trafficking

- Assist the client in identifying what barriers exist for exiting their situation.
- Enhance motivation through seeking safe situations and problem solving.
- Develop employable skills/gain training or complete education.
- Manage mental health and physical health issues.
- Provide ongoing support through a mentor/sponsor/role model.
- Drug/alcohol treatment if needed.
- Assistance in dealing with traumatic memories.
- Safety planning for exiting strategies.
- Support to develop healthy and supportive relationships.

# Sex Trafficking Victims

- May not identify as a victim
- Not often seen by victim advocates
- Many seek services from domestic violence systems but most do not receive specific services
- Can be both poly-victims and poly-offenders
- May struggle to get out of the 'life'

# Sex Trafficking in Arizona

- Grade of 'C' regarding legislation protecting sex trafficking victims, particularly youth ages 15-17.
- Developing awareness of the issue from law enforcement, service providers, courts and prosecutors.
- No access to victim service funds.
- Very limited resources focused on this issue.

# Where can DV victims go in AZ?

In 2012,  
9,567 kids  
and adults  
served in  
**Arizona** (Homeless  
in AZ 2012 Annual Report)

- Beds available in Arizona for domestic violence victims

# Where can ST victims go in AZ?

52 for  
minors

18 for  
adults

- **Shelter beds exclusively designated for sex trafficking survivors in Arizona.**

# What needs to change

- Increase targeted community knowledge about what to look for in DV cases that may also be sex trafficking cases.
- Decrease the stigma and blame towards victims of sex trafficking.
- Share domestic violence services with sex trafficking victims.

# Questions?

## Contact Information

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