

Domestic violence and it's prevention

Summary

Though the exact definitions vary, there is a general consent considering the main characteristics of domestic violence. These characteristics are: certain form of the violent behavior, privacy as a location of this behavior, intimate relationship between perpetrator and the victim and chronicity of violent incidents. Although the largest attention has been so far paid to the violence against women, there is a significant increase in the interest in other forms of domestic violence (e.g.: female violence, violence against seniors or violence in homosexual relationships).

The etiology of domestic violence is complicated and ambiguous. Modern theoretical approaches prefer multicausal models that comprehend both social and individual roots of violence.

Number of authors classifies different types of domestic violence not only according to the form of violence, but especially according to its specific dynamics. Because these classifications are mostly based upon surveys of violence against women, it is questionable to what extent are they applicable on another above mentioned forms of domestic violence.

The prevalence of domestic violence is alarming both on worldwide and national basis, especially when its high latency is taken into account. To lower this latency is certainly a task of police and state social service. Still - until violence in private relationships is widely tolerated (as a mean of education or as a way of solving conflicts) it is not to be anticipated, despite flawless work of above mentioned departments, that the latency would decrease profoundly. Despite the differences in methodology that leads to slightly different conclusions as to concrete number of violent relationships, sex of the perpetrator or the gravity of violence, it is a fact, that privacy of family or partnership is the most common location of violent behavior.

From the victimological point of view, domestic violence represents a specific problem. The primal victimization occurs repeatedly, there is an intimate relationship between the victim and the perpetrator and the victims suffer from distinctive physical and psychological symptoms. As long as family is also the basic social and economical unit, there is also a threat of social exclusion and economical deprivation. The most important psychological concept of the domestic violence consequences is still the battered woman syndrome (battered spouse syndrome, battered partner syndrome), though it is not the only relevant model. Children as witnesses of domestic violence are always also its victims (even if only indirect ones) and presence at violence between parents is a risk factor for becoming either a perpetrator or a victim of domestic violence.

Analogously the perpetrators of domestic violence differ in certain aspects from the perpetrators of other crimes. Beside a group of perpetrators suffering from psychological (psychiatrist) problems, there is a large number of "normal" men, conform in their public life, who are violent only in privacy (two-faced offenders). Social tolerance of violence perpetrated in privacy is in these cases one of the crucial facilitating factors affecting the occurrence of domestic violence.

Prevention of domestic violence is realized on several levels. None measure, whether education, criminalization, victim support, police or judicial order such as expulsion or therapy of the victim or offender, is sufficient per se. The most effective prevention of occurrence and recurrence of domestic violence are according to the practice the interdisciplinary projects with both public and private subjects participating. The goal of this

projects is not primarily penalizing the offender, but fulfillment of the maxim, that everyone has right of life free of violence.