

GETTING STARTED:

TIPS FOR HIV/AIDS PROVIDERS

It is critical that HIV/AIDS service providers gain an understanding of the intersection of HIV/AIDS and domestic violence (DV). Service providers can implement programming that can better support those accessing their services who may be experiencing domestic violence.

Below are a few steps that your organization can take to better address the intersection of HIV/AIDS and domestic violence:

TALK ABOUT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE/INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

- Have materials such as posters or brochures on domestic violence/reproductive coercion displayed throughout your organization so that all program participants can see the information. A local domestic violence agency may be able to provide those materials. Additionally, in the *Positively Safe* toolkit, there are over 40 different tools available in multiple languages that are free to download and print out. Review the **HIV Power and Control Wheel** and **Conversation Guide: Starting the Discussion about Domestic Violence** for more information on how to incorporate this content into your advocacy.
- Incorporate discussions about domestic violence in multiple settings such as during individual counseling, support groups, and other supportive environments. Discussions on domestic violence should be had with all program participants.
- Have resources readily available that provide information about domestic violence service providers in easily accessible areas.

PARTNER WITH A LOCAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICE PROVIDER

- Create a relationship with a local domestic violence service provider with whom your organization can cross-train staff to keep your organization up-to-date with best practices in talking about domestic violence and reproductive coercion. For more information on creating a successful partnership, please review the **Successful Partnerships handout** and **Collaboration Action Plan Template** resources in the *Positively Safe Toolkit*.
- Create a referral process between the organizations to support anyone who discloses experiencing domestic violence and may be interested in pursuing supportive services.
 - Create a space in your program for a domestic violence advocate to come in on a weekly or biweekly basis. If someone does disclose experiencing domestic violence, they can speak with an advocate onsite if they feel comfortable and ready. Because discussing domestic violence can be difficult and often triggering, consider how to make the space welcoming and comforting such as:
 - Consider calling this area a space to discuss healthy relationships
 - Comfortable seating
 - No harsh lighting
 - Avoid clutter
 - Provide adult coloring sheets or fidget toys, this can relieve some of the stress while speaking with an advocate

SEXUAL HEALTH SAFETY PLANNING

- Discuss sex and sexuality in the context of safety planning with all participants. Safety planning is a personalized plan to keep a survivor of domestic violence safe. Safety plans are ongoing conversations that happen between an advocate and a survivor around different aspects of their life. The goal of a safety plan is to maximize safety and minimize the harm an abusive partner may inflict on the survivor. These plans are always survivor-driven and may change as circumstances change.
- For more information on safety planning, please review the **Safety Planning Guide** resource in the *Positively Safe Toolkit*.
- Some things to consider when creating a sexual health safety plan include:
 - Consider offering PrEP as a safety planning tool for those who are not currently living with HIV. Incorporate the **PrEP Yourself for Safety (postcard)**, found in the Positively Safe Toolkit, in these discussions.
 - Medication storage – consider splitting up 90-day supplies of medication and keeping 30-day supply with a trusted friend or in a trusted location
 - Pharmacy location – does the abusive partner know what pharmacy the survivor picks up their ART or PrEP medications?
 - Doctor’s appointments – does their provider know when/what hours are safe to call? Is it safe to leave a voicemail? Is the abusive partner attending all appointments and prohibiting the survivor from speaking freely?
 - Make sexual safety planning a core service offered.



CHANGE ORGANIZATIONAL POLICIES & PROCEDURES

- Add domestic violence support to the core services you provide for all participants, giving everyone the information that they need to understand what DV is and what resources are available.
- Review and incorporate DV disclosure responses, safety planning, referral options, and confidentiality standards in your organization’s policies and procedures.
- Train and prepare all staff to be comfortable and confident when discussing domestic violence. Remember that DV expertise is not required to provide someone support or discuss safety planning. Providing the initial support is key in helping someone get or remain safe.

For more information about how your organization can receive individualized training on the intersection of HIV/AIDS & domestic violence, please contact the positively safe team at the National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV) at DVHIV@NNEDV.org.