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Suggested guidelines for setting up a Domestic Violence Church Policy and Church-Based Response Team

1. Who will provide the overall leadership of the team and creation of the DV policy?
2. Will the church make a public statement regarding the DV Policy? Perhaps October 2020 which is Domestic Violence month so it's staggered from the start of the Bible study in sensitivity to the women attending.
3. What will we do when abuse is disclosed?
 - a. *Becoming a Church that Cares Well for the Abused* may speak to some of these questions.
4. Does the existing church discipline policy cover DV? Who will be responsible for confronting the perpetrator and providing truth that is confrontational? Who will provide ongoing accountability for the perpetrator?
5. Domestic Violence Intervention requires a multi-disciplinary approach with a team of trained individuals. ALL team member's individual roles need to be defined.
 - a. Pastor(s) in leadership over the team
 - b. Church Members
 - c. Counselor
 - d. Advocate
 - i. Speaking for the wife so that her voice can be heard.
 - ii. Are there church members who would be willing to train as advocates?
 - e. Mentor/Friend/Extended Family
 - f. Trauma Specialist
 - i. Any members in our church in this field whose experience we can tap?
 - g. Legal Representative
 - i. Any members in our church in this field whose experience we can tap?
 - h. Law Enforcement
 - i. Any members in our church in this field whose experience we can tap?
 - i. Community Liaison
 - i. To build and maintain a relationship between the faith community and local service providers and stay up to date on resources for DV victims.
6. What safety policies/protocols will the church need to have in place? If someone needs to get out of their situation, do we have places to send them?
 - i. Are there church members willing to take women/children into their homes? Is this safe?
 - ii. Who will be the 1st contact? Who will write the safety planning materials?

- iii. Do we have connections with local shelters, local community agencies, local DV Agencies to refer women to?
- 7. What data systems can be set up where counseling notes and information can be housed **confidentially** and be accessible to all team members?
 - i. Waivers need to be created for victims and perpetrators to sign
 - ii. Interventions need to be planned and **only ever** with the victim's consent
- 8. Are there other churches with DV Policies in place who we can go to for advice?
 - i. North Wake (Mindy Williams)
 - ii. Summit (Omar King & Brad Hambrick)
 - iii. Rolesville Baptist (Jim Upchurch)
- 9. The main focus of the DV Policy needs to be Victim Safety and Perpetrator Accountability.

Definitions of Abuse (Chris Moles – The Safest Place training)

An **abuse of power**, manifested through **selfishly motivated** patterns of behavior intended to **exercise or maintain control** over one's partner. Pride drives a pattern of abuse.

1. Physical Abuse – hitting, slapping, shoving, grabbing, pinching, biting or hair pulling. Also includes denying medical care or forcing alcohol or drug use on abused.
2. Sexual Abuse – coercing or attempting to coerce any sexual contact or behavior without consent. Includes marital rape, attacks on sexual parts of the body, forcing sex after physical violence has occurred and treating in a sexually demeaning way. Also includes the FEAR of these things happening.
3. Emotional Abuse – undermining an individual's sense of self. This may include constant criticism, diminishing one's abilities, name-calling and damaging one's relationship with the children. Using means of affection or emotion to control including ridicule, guilt trips and slander.
4. Economic Abuse – making or attempting to make an individual financially dependent by maintaining total control over the financial resources. Withholding one's access to money or forbidding one's attendance at school or employment. (Hyper Headship)
5. Psychological Abuse – causing fear by intimidation. Threatening physical harm to self, partner, children or partner's family and friends. Destruction of pets and property and forcing isolation from family, friends or school and/or work. Threats of suicide.

Statistics of Abuse:

"One out of every four homes in America will experience domestic abuse and it is no different in the church than in the so-called secular world. In fact, conservative Christians are more likely to remain in violence and think it is biblical."

(Dan Allender in his review of *Is It My Fault?: Hope and Healing for Those Suffering Domestic Violence*. J & L Holcomb)

"Every nine seconds in the United States a woman is assaulted or abused." Chris Moles in The Safest Place training

"Everyday in the United States more than three woman are murdered by a husband or boyfriend." Chris Moles

"1-5 teenage girls who have been in a relationship said a boyfriend threatened violence or self-harm if present with a break up." Chris Moles