Innovative health systems responses to victims of DV with disabilities

- Presenter:
  - Paul Feuerstein, President/CEO of Barrier Free Living, New York City

Dependency-Stress Model

- Children with Disabilities are more dependent on their caregivers
- Increased dependency increases demands on caregiver
- Increased demands lead to increased stress
- Caregivers abuse their children because they can't cope with increased stress

Duluth Power and Control Wheel

Multifactorial Model

People with Disabilities have a Higher Rate of Abuse

- Women with disabilities have a 40% greater risk of experiencing violence than women without disabilities.
- Women with developmental disabilities have among the highest rates of physical, sexual, and emotional violence perpetrated by intimate partners and family members.
- Studies estimate that 80% of women with disabilities have been sexually assaulted.
- Studies estimate that between 70% and 85% of cases of abuse against adults with disabilities go unreported.
- Children with disabilities are more than twice as likely as children without disabilities to be physically abused, and almost twice as likely to be sexually abused.

* National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Barlow & Yuen, 2009, Young et al 1997
People with Disabilities stay in Dangerous conditions significantly longer

- 11.3 years vs. 7.1 years in situations of physical abuse
- 8.3 years vs. 4.1 years in situations of sexual abuse (Taylor University Study)

The Traumatic Experience

- Overwhelming senses
- Overwhelming Sense of Meaning
- Overwhelming Defenses
- Disempowerment

Need for Targeted Screening by Health Care Providers

- Ask the question as a routine part of health intake
- CDC Emergency Room Study found that Intimate Partner Violence focused on eye area, cheekbones and intracranial (brain) injuries.
- Stranger violence focused on the jaw

The Major Symptoms of PTSD

- Re-experiencing
- Numbing
- Arousal

Self Injury is also a product of Domestic Violence

- Gives victims a sense of control over their bodies
- The physical pain causes the bodies endorphins to block out the psychological pain

Barrier Free Living’s Model

- Nursing Component
  - Addressing Healthcare Needs
- Psychiatry/Social Work Component
  - Addressing the Trauma
- Occupational Therapy Component
  - Capacity Building
Health Care Coordination

• Prior health care providers are the first place and abuser will look
  – Establishing new medical relationships
  – Safety Planning with specialized services

Positive Parenting Intervention

• Orientation to Childhood Development
• Positive Discipline Techniques
• Negotiating Skills
• Building Strong Parent-Child Relationships
• Establishing Boundaries
• Managing Daily Frustrations
• Increasing a child's self esteem
• Creating/Maintaining Family Traditions

Addressing Trauma

• Establishing Trust
  – Worker as Caregiver
• Psychoeducation
  – Worker as Teacher
• Psychotherapy
  – Worker as Midwife

Concepts of Interdependent Living

• No one lives independently
• Those who consider themselves “independent” negotiate their dependencies over a larger group of people or systems
• Reciprocity is a key part of Interdependence
  – I’m dependent on others
  – Others are dependent on me

Our Habilitation Model

• Money Management
• Time Management
• Travel Training
• Shopping and Cooking Skills; Nutrition Education
• Health Care Management; Home Care Management
• Advocacy with support systems
• Stress Management

Helper Therapy

• Moving from being a recipient of help to a giver of help is a transformative experience.
  – Self Image
  – Empowerment