

Helping Survivor's to Over-come the Effects of Domestic Violence

- **Immediate planning should focus on safety issues.** The domestic violence survivor may not be able to think about future goal setting until the family is out of crisis.
- **Develop Case Plans with the experts.** You are not expected to be an expert on safety planning. Consult with your local domestic violence service provider as you begin to case plan.
- **Provide DV survivors with options.** It is important that you avoid making decisions for the survivor. Give the survivor as much time as necessary to weigh the options. Respect her safety concerns.
- **Plan to take small steps and then build on those successes.** Survivors may have had little opportunity for success or they may be very successful. Individualized case management is crucial.
- **Develop plans that focus on the family, including the children.** Children are sometimes considered the silent victims of domestic violence. Early intervention may help them to adjust to their new living situation and help them overcome the affects of witnessing violence.
- **If the DV survivor is still with the batterer, avoid telling her she should leave.** The DHS office may be the only place she's allowed to go without the batterer. Support and plan with her to be as safe as possible within her home.
- **Never interview a domestic violence survivor in the presence of a suspected batterer.**
- **Always respect the survivor's confidentiality.** Confidentiality is especially crucial for domestic violence survivors. Batterers may have led them to believe they "know all and see all".