

Adult Education & Domestic Trauma

by Andres Muro

According to the National Domestic Violence Hotline (www.ndvh.org), an estimated one third of all women report domestic abuse by a spouse or boyfriend at some point in their lives. The American Institute on Domestic Violence (www.aidv-usa.com), reports that:

- ◆ every nine seconds a woman is beaten in the United States;
- ◆ between three and four million women are battered each year; and
- ◆ domestic violence is the leading cause of injury to women.

These statistics raised the question for the staff at the El Paso Community College's Community Education Program, "What is the extent to which women attending adult education programs are victims of domestic trauma?"

We enlisted the support of Mexican immigrant women learners in our program, having

those who agreed to participate fill out a questionnaire in Spanish designed to discover experiences and attitudes toward domestic violence and how these affected their learning experience. While the study is small and focused on one program, it does provide a window into the ways that women learners experience abuse in relation to their pursuit of education.

The table on the next page summarizes the results of the questionnaires returned by the 113 participants who reported that they lived with someone. The percentage totals reflect women who had these experiences anywhere from "at least rarely" to "frequently."

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Additional Resources

Too Scared to Learn: Women, Violence and Education. Jenny Horsman. Available in Canada and the U.S. Check www.jennyhorsman.com for publishers and distributors who carry the book.

Take on the Challenge: A Sourcebook from the Women, Violence and Adult Education Project. Elizabeth Morrish, Jenny Horsman, and Judy Hofer, eds. Available from World Education or on the Internet in pdf format: www.worlded.org/docs/TakeOnTheChallenge.pdf.

Learning to Live without Violence: A Handbook for Men (Updated 1997), Daniel Jay Sonkin and Michael Durphy. Spanish version: ***Aprender a Vivir Sin Violencia: Manual Para Hombres***, Daniel Jay Sonkin, Michael Durphy and translated by Jorge Corsi. Both are available from Volcano Press.