



GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF UNITY

*As members of a united California Partnership to End Domestic Violence,
we affirm these Principles of Unity to guide our work individually and collectively:*

UNITY

- We are unified in the belief that victims/survivors and allies working together have a greater impact in creating lasting social change to realize the vision of a California free from domestic violence.
- We understand our vision requires urgent action conducted in a spirit of determination, hope, cooperation and solidarity.

SAFE and HEALTHY LIVES

- We recognize domestic violence is a serious threat to the well-being of all women, children and men, and hold steadfast to the belief that safe homes and safe families are the foundation of a safe society.
- We affirm the rights of all persons to live without fear of abuse, oppression or the threat of violence, and believe every individual deserves to be treated with dignity and respect.

UNDERSTANDING of DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

- We recognize domestic violence as a range of behaviors used to exert control or establish power by one intimate partner over the other. The range of behavior can include psychological, emotional, verbal, sexual, financial, spiritual, and physical abuse, as well as stalking and threatening behaviors.
- We acknowledge that abuse and violence are learned behaviors and as such, can be unlearned. We will actively engage in primary prevention strategies, change social norms which support abusive behavior, and advance the community's responsibility for preventing domestic violence from being learned.
- We understand domestic violence to be a multi-layered problem requiring a coordinated community response.

VICTIMS / SURVIVORS

- We acknowledge that historically and statistically, domestic violence primarily involves male perpetrators and female victims/survivors. However, we seek to advocate for all victims/survivors including men, and individuals from oppressed ethnic communities, individuals with disabilities, individuals in same-gender relationships, and especially, youth and children who are also victims/survivors of violence.
- We support the strength and healing of victims/survivors and advocate for systems change which requires challenging institutional systems that continue to create barriers for victims/survivors.

BATTERER ACCOUNTABILITY

- We believe that people who are abusive are responsible for their behavior and should be held accountable for their actions by the legal and judicial systems, media, friends, family, co-workers and communities.

SELF-DETERMINATION and EMPOWERMENT

- We seek to validate victims/survivors by encouraging them to define their experiences and acknowledging that they are the experts in their own lives. Therefore, we seek to provide information and resources so victims/survivors can consider options and make empowered life choices. We advocate for all battered persons while respecting victims'/survivors' rights to self-determination and control over their own lives.

CULTURAL COMPETENCY

- We understand cultural competency is both an individual and institutional practice which is characterized by the acceptance of and respect for difference. We acknowledge that "culture" refers to shared experiences or commonalities that develop and evolve in dynamic social and political contexts. We understand that cultures are complex and contradictory in nature with widespread acceptance of domestic violence and traditions of resistance coexisting and creating tension.
- We advocate for the availability and accessibility of high quality, culturally competent and linguistically-appropriate services.
- We support adherence to CPEDV's extended cultural diversity declaration.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

- We are committed to raising public awareness about domestic violence by educating policymakers, media, individuals, and communities on effective and comprehensive intervention and prevention strategies.
- We are committed to ensuring that responses to domestic violence reflect the realities of victims'/survivors' experiences.

SOCIAL CHANGE

- We recognize that the status of women and children has advanced, yet progress has been uneven, and serious inequalities and obstacles continue to hinder the ability to obtain justice for victims/survivors of domestic violence. Therefore, we assert domestic violence is a human rights and social justice issue that requires fundamental social change.
- We believe that, in order to end domestic violence, we must eliminate all forms of oppression and advocate for social reform. We will work to ensure that institutional forms of oppression are not perpetuated in services, distribution of resources, or policies and practices. We seek to increase the numbers of men willing to work in partnership with us to reach our common goal of social change, and we support their efforts to mobilize others in ending domestic violence.
- We strive to be flexible and responsive to evolving needs as social change occurs over time.

LEADERSHIP

- We honor the example set by those who came before us by making an individual and organizational commitment to help advance the leadership of women, victims/survivors and individuals with diverse backgrounds.
- We are committed to playing a leadership role in advancing policy and systems change in the movement to end domestic violence.