

“For me, it was something as simple as a calming tone, a voice. If that voice had been anything other than accepting and forgiving, I might not have spoken up.”

Kaiser Permanente member



We believe in
TAKING ACTION
to end domestic violence.

Kaiser Permanente
Family Violence Prevention Program

This poster, “There is Another Way,” was developed by our Family Violence Prevention Program and has been distributed throughout our medical facilities and in the community.

Contact us

For more information about our Kaiser Permanente Northern California Family Violence Prevention Program, call Brigid McCaw, MD, MPH, MS, FACP at **(510) 987-2035** or Krista Kotz, PhD, MPH at **(510) 987-2078**.

kp.org/domesticviolence





We're part of the solution.

One in four women and one in fourteen men will be victims of intimate partner violence at some point in their lives.*

At Kaiser Permanente, we believe everyone deserves a safe and healthy relationship. But we also understand that it's difficult for people to talk about violence they experience from a family member or intimate partner. That's why our physicians and the rest of our health care team take the initiative to identify domestic violence and provide referrals and resources to help end abuse.

In 1998, we started the Family Violence Prevention Program, an innovative model of care at our Kaiser Permanente Richmond Medical Center in Northern California. This program provides a comprehensive and integrated approach—to build awareness, provide care, and prevent further cases of domestic violence.

Today, we're implementing this model at all our facilities in Northern California. It's just another example of how we're caring for the total health of our members—mind, body, and spirit—so they can live life well.

"Violence is a learned response, and like any learned response, it can be changed."

Brigid McCaw, MD
Medical Director
Kaiser Permanente
Family Violence Prevention Program

"I had an appointment with one of my doctors, and she started asking me some questions. I guess that's what I was waiting for. She made me feel very comfortable, so I started telling her some of the things that were going on. She mentioned that there was a support group here."

Kaiser Permanente member

*Tjaden, P. and Thoennes, N., Washington (DC): U.S. Department of Justice; 2000b. Publication No. NCJ183781.

“Kaiser Permanente’s Family Violence Prevention Program is a great example of our belief in the total health of our members. It helps us make sure that anyone who’s experienced family violence gets the care they need and the follow-up that can save lives. Your vital signs include more than your height, weight, and blood pressure; they include how happy and healthy you are with your life.”

George Halvorson
Chairman and CEO, Kaiser
Foundation Health Plan Inc., and
Kaiser Foundation and Hospitals, Inc.

Because health is a cause.

Domestic violence, also known as intimate partner violence, affects all types of people, regardless of gender, ethnicity, race, sexual identity, or religion. The effects are damaging, enduring, and far-reaching—and they impact the mind as well as the body. Victims don’t just include the person who’s abused, they also include family members who witness the violence. That’s why domestic violence prevention is one of our community goals.

The hurt doesn’t stop with the injuries. Intimate partner violence often leads to a higher rate of other health conditions such as chronic pain, headache, depression, and low birth weight. Domestic violence is clearly a health issue.

Kaiser Permanente is proud to be a leader in addressing the problems of family violence and working with our partners in health care, government, and the community to develop programs that work. Because when we’re all healthy, happy, and safe, we all thrive.



Our four-part model of success.

1. Creating a supportive environment

Some victims of domestic violence will open up to a physician or another health care professional who asks about their family situation. But others respond only after learning about their options and being encouraged to talk to someone who can help. We inform our members about available resources by placing posters, flyers, and brochures in our medical offices, as well as publishing articles in our member newsletter, *Partners in Health*. Resource information is also available electronically through our physician home pages and via our Web site at kp.org/domesticviolence. We place a priority on creating a comfortable atmosphere so a member will feel safe reaching out and seeking help.

2. Screening and referrals

Through the Family Violence Prevention Program, we train physicians and other health care team members about the current challenges of domestic violence. Our physicians, nurses, and the rest of our health care teams know what resources are available and how to refer members to them. And our physicians receive additional training to help identify, assess, and support members who are at risk.

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Our four-part model of success. *(continued)*

Results that matter.

3. Providing on-site resources

We refer members experiencing intimate partner violence to the appropriate specially qualified team member from our Behavioral Medicine, Social Services, or Mental Health Departments. These professionals have received additional training in handling family violence cases, and can help with the following:

- Assess the danger the member faces at home
- Help the member create a safety plan
- Refer the member to a specialized domestic violence program in the community

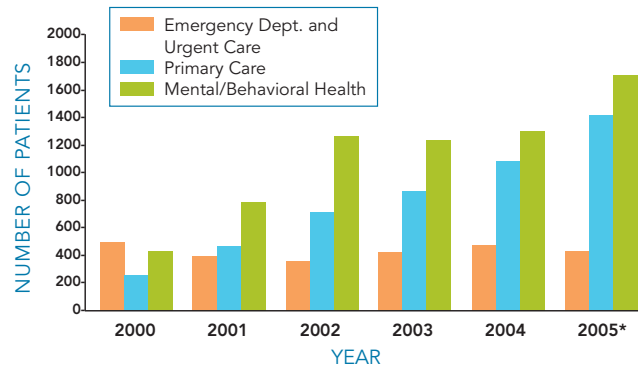
Some of our medical centers also offer an on-site domestic violence support group, where members can learn from others and share their experiences in a nonjudgmental, supportive, and compassionate environment.

4. Connecting with community groups and educational resources

The needs of those experiencing domestic violence are often broader than what can be met in a health care setting. So we've formed partnerships with community advocacy groups and law enforcement agencies that can provide additional services to members. This includes legal support and help in getting restraining orders, emergency housing, and other advocacy services. And because prevention is an important part of addressing domestic violence, our medical centers provide classes in parenting skills and stress and anger management.

Since we've started our Family Violence Prevention Program in Northern California, we've identified more members affected by domestic violence. But what's more important is that a growing number of these cases are now being identified in less acute settings such as primary care visits (see chart). By creating a supportive environment for our members to talk about domestic violence, we're helping to address the problem early, before it develops into a potentially more serious injury or results in a visit to the Emergency Department.

Our physicians are encouraged to ask members about their home situation and family relationships as a way of opening the door to specific questions regarding domestic violence. Our statistics show that members who recall being asked these questions show a higher level of satisfaction with their health care practitioner.



*Data for 2005 is an estimate based on data from Q1 and Q2.

Graph shows annual increase in number of Kaiser Permanente members in Northern California identified as experiencing domestic violence. Identification of domestic violence is shifting to less acute settings such as primary care.

Source: Quality and Operations Support, Kaiser Permanente Northern California, 2005