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Crossroads: The Intersection of Economic Stability, Maternal Health, & Intimate Partner Violence

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a significant public health concern that affects millions of women worldwide. IPV during pregnancy is defined as any physical, sexual, or psychological harm inflicted by a current or former partner **during pregnancy** or within the **first year** after delivery. The prevalence of IPV during pregnancy varies across countries and cultures, with rates ranging from 2% to 35%. It's important to note that IPV during pregnancy often goes unreported and undetected, so the actual prevalence may be higher than reported [1-4]. There are well-established risk factors associated with higher rates of abuse, including young age, single relationship status, minority race/ethnicity, and poverty. [5-6] Indeed, studies conducted among samples of low-income, predominantly single women have noted higher prevalence with rates up to 50%. [7-8]

In addition to IPV during pregnancy being associated with a range of adverse health outcomes for both the mother and the developing fetus, **emotional and economic** abuse are often prevalent. **Financial or economic** abuse occurs in 99% of cases where other forms of IPV are present. **Physical** violence during pregnancy can result in injuries including head trauma. **Psychological** abuse during pregnancy can cause depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

The stress that accompanies a pregnancy is troublesome enough. When a survivor needs to factor in safety, adequate job performance, and financial stability all while experiencing IPV—the risks of harm to herself and fetus are magnified. Economic stability is critical to a survivor who is trying to leave their abuser***. Employers who have built a culture of support with policies, training, and resources are lifesavers to a survivor. The workplace may be the only safe place.***

Paid family medical leave benefits both the employer and the survivor. STANDING FIRM advocates along with the Family Care Act Coalition (see updates below). Organizations of all sizes can sign on to support this bill

- That is funded by a small employee payroll deduction, ensuring neither the business nor employee is overburdened.
- That supports survivors who may need time off for medical appointments, court dates, or moving out without worrying about lost wages or being placed on any type of corrective action plan.
- That allows businesses to effectively compete—more effectively attracting and retaining valuable employees; and
- That strengthens the working class and reduces the need for food stamps or income subsidies by 4%. [9]

Prevention & Opportunities

Awareness raising is an important first step. From there, the true preventative work is by affecting systemic change. A few ways this can be done:

- **Remove barriers** to accessing affordable prenatal care.
- **Advocate for Paid Family Medical Leave**
- **Expand occupational equity** (operating without bias at every stage of employment, including providing equitable pay and equitable access to opportunities.)
- **Transform workplaces to reflect the needs of survivors & their families**

- **Contact** STANDING FIRM contactsf@standing-firm.org to get started!

Family Care Act Updates in Pennsylvania

From the Family Care Act Coalition: GREAT NEWS--Family Care Act introduced in Senate!
The Family Care Act has been officially introduced in the Pennsylvania Senate and referred to the Labor & Industry committee as SB580. Its prime sponsor is Sen. Devlin J. Robinson.

There's still work to be done. It's time to continue spreading the word about the necessity of paid leave and connect with your PA senators. We encourage you to reach out to Sen. Robinson and to your representatives to let them know that running the bill in the Senate is the right thing to do for Pennsylvania families and businesses. Individual, organizational, and non-profit support is critical to making paid family, medical and safe leave a reality for Pennsylvanians.

Remarks on SB 580 - The Family Care Act - Senator Robinson

Call to Action!

- **Visit** https://www.familycareact.com/ to learn more!
- **Sign** the petition for increased domestic violence funding: https://pcadv.salsalabs.org/fy24-domestic-violence-state-funding-petition/index.html

STANDING FIRM Presents

Senior Account Executive Mary Onufer presented *"Violence Comes to Work—Be Ready to Respond"* at the 40th Annual Pennsylvania Workforce Development Association conference in Hershey, PA May 1st-3rd. To learn more about STANDING FIRM, visit our website.

A Comprehensive Review of Intimate Partner Violence During Pregnancy and Its Adverse Effects on Maternal and Fetal Health

Intersectionality and Domestic Violence

Older Americans Awareness Month:

Powered by Connection

Elder Justice

Understanding Abuse in Later Life

Mental Health Awareness Month:

NAMI Toolkit

Citations

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3. Fast facts: preventing intimate partner violence. [Apr; 2023]. 2023. https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/intimatepartnerviolence/fastfact.html

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