People with Disabilities in Partner Relationships

Targets Disability with Physical and Sexual Abuse Coercion Withhold Support or

Threatens to leave or to take children · Says will kill partner, children, pets or service animals · Threatens to have partner arrested or institutionalized · Forces use of alcohol or drugs on addicted partner · Makes partner steal or buy drugs

Treatment

Steals or throws away medication · Doesn't provide medicine or support when needed · Doesn't allow needed medical treatment · To increase dependence. breaks or does not let partner use assistive devices (phone, wheelchair, cane, walker, etc.)

Emotional Abuse

Insults and shames about disability · Gives conflicting messages by both helping and hurting · Sneaks up to startle · Abuses more as partner becomes independent · Drives dangerously to scare · Disrespects boundaries · Talks down to partner · Torments by not letting partner sleep

Privilege (Ableism)

Overprotects · Makes decisions alone · Creates physical barriers to getting around (moves furniture, leaves cluttter) · Keeps tabs on partner for "safety" reasons because of disability · Takes over tasks to make partner more dependent

Economic Abuse

Controls all money · Uses partner's disability income for self · Does not share expenses because being partner to person with a disability is a "favor" · Does not allow partner to work and be economically independent

Power and Control

Isolation

Pressures to give up disability services · Confines and restrains to restrict access to others · Exposes disability (AIDS, mental illness, etc.) to others to isolate · Limits contact with others Threatens friends · Says no one else cares

Sexual Abuse

Forces sex when partner unable to physically resist · Humiliates sexually because of disability · Makes decisions about birth control/pregnancy · Cheats and lies (does not think partner will know because of disability) · Pressures partner Pargets Disability with Physical and Sexual Abuse into prostitution

Minimize. **Denv and Blame**

Lies about abuse to others (says partner is crazy, fell out of wheelchair, is forgetful, just didn't take medications) · Blames disability for abuse · Twists reality, says abuse did not happen

stop abuse for SAFE everyone

A merger of Austin Children's Shelter and SafePlace

P.O. Box 19454, Austin. Texas 78760 Confidential, 24-hour SAFE hotline: 512.267.SAFE (7233)

For Deaf people of all identities, please use relay/VRS



Adapted with permission from DOMESTIC ABUSE INTERVENTION PROJECT 202 East Superior Street, Duluth, MN 55802 218.722.2781 | theduluthmodel.org

Created by SAFE with in-depth input from people with disabilities. disabilityservices@safeaustin.org

POWER & CONTROL WHEEL: PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND THEIR CAREGIVERS

Physical VIOLENCE

COERCION AND THREATS:

Threatening to hurt the person; withold basic support and rights; terminate relationship and leave the person unattended; report noncompliance with the program; use more intrusive equipment. Using consequences and punishments to gain compliant behavior. Pressuring the person to engage in fraud or other crimes.

INTIMIDATION:

Raising a hand or using looks, actions, or gestures to create fear. Destroying property and abusing pets. Mistreating service animals. Displaying weapons.

Sexual

EMOTIONAL ABUSE:

tastes. Enforcing a negative

reinforcement program or any

behavior program the person

Controlling access to friends, family, and neighbors.

because of caregiver schedule.

Discouraging contact with the

Controlling access to phone, TV, news. Limiting

case manager or advocate.

employment possibilities

doesn't consent to.

ISOLATION:

Punishing or ridiculing. Refusing

to speak and ignoring requests. Ridiculing the person's culture, traditions, religion, and personal

CAREGIVER PRIVILEGE:

Treating person as a child, servant. Making unilateral decisions. Defining narrow, limiting roles and responsibilities. Providing care in a way that accentuates the person's dependence and vulnerability. Giving an opinion as if it were the person's opinion. Denying the right to privacy. Ignoring, discouraging, or prohibiting the exercise of full capabilities.

ECONOMIC ABUSE:

Using person's property and money for staff's benefit. Stealing. Using property and/or money as a reward pr punishment in a behavior program. Making financial decisions based on agency or family needs. Limiting access to financial information and resources resulting in unnecessary impoverishment.

POWER CONTROL

WITHHOLD, MISUSE, OR DELAY NEEDED **SUPPORTS:**

Using medication to sedate the person for agency convenience. Ignoring equipment safety requirements. Breaking or not fixing adaptive equipment. Refusing to use or destroying communication devices. Withdrawing care or equipment to immobilize the person. Physical Using equipment to torture people.

MINIMIZE, JUSTIFY, AND BLAME:

Denying or making light of abuse. Denying the physical and emotional pain of people with disabilities. Justifying rules that limit autonomy, dignity, and relationships for program's operational efficiency. Excusing abuse as behavior management or as due to caregiver stress. Blaming the disability for abuse. Saying the person is not a "good VIOLENCE Sexual

Developed by: Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence 307 S. Paterson St., Suite 2, Madison, WI 53703 608-255-0539

NATIONAL CENTER on Domestic and Sexual Violence training · consulting · advocacy

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Based on the model by the Domestic Violence Intervention Project, Duluth, MN.

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