



National Resource Center
on Domestic Violence

Honoring Survivors' Spiritual Needs: Supporting Jewish, Catholic, and Muslim Survivors of Domestic Violence

September 23, 2020

Deborah Rosenbloom, JD/MPA, Jewish
Women International

Sharon A. O'Brien, Ph.D., Catholics For
Family Peace,

National Institute for the Family
Saman Quraeshi, Board of Directors,
Peaceful Families Project



Disclaimer

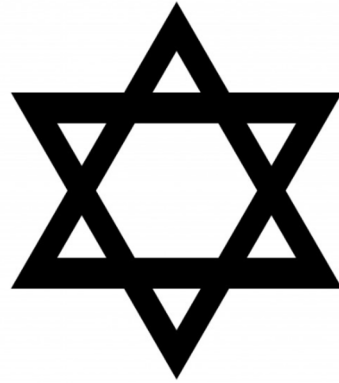
This training was made possible by Grant Number #90EV042802 from the Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Why Does Faith Matter?

- It's a lens through which people interpret what happens in their lives
- It's a lens through which people make meaning of their lives
- It's a source of identity
- It's a source of community

Objectives

- **Understand** how faith can be a resource or a barrier to hope, help & healing
- **Gain** insight into faith-specific understandings to support survivors for whom faith is critical to identity and/or decision-making
- **Become** aware of best practices and resources for engaging faith leaders as allies
- **Begin** to strategize how to engage faith leaders as allies



What are your first thoughts when someone says the words, “Jew or Jewish”?

Jewish Community in the United States

Community structures

- 3,000 synagogues
- Community based federations and Jewish Family Services
- Schools, summer camps, national youth movements

Denominational Preference

- Orthodox: 10%
- Conservative: 26%
- Reform: 35%
- Just Jewish: 25%

Jewish Community in the United States

- Religious laws guide daily living - food, prayer, marital relations, & Sabbath and holiday observance.
- The synagogue is the house of worship.
- Rabbis are the spiritual leaders. Traditionally, only men were rabbis.
- The Torah (5 books of Moses, Old Testament) is the book of Divine Law.
- The Talmud contains the legal discussions interpreting the Torah.



**What are your first thoughts when
someone says the words,
“Catholic” or “Christian”?**

Christians in the United States

71 % of the U.S. population identifies as Christian.

Denominations

- Catholic 20.8%
- Protestants 49.9%
 - Evangelical Protestant 25.4%
 - Mainline Protestant 14.7%
 - Historically Black Protestant 6.5%
 - Mormon, Orthodox Christian, Jehovah's Witness, Other: 3.3

Christian Community in the United States

Christians are united in these Basic Beliefs:

- One God in Three Divine Persons: God the Father, Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and the Holy Spirit.
- God became a human being in Jesus of Nazareth, who preached a message of mercy and love, was executed, rose from death, and ascended into heaven
- God's Word is found in the Bible, made up of the Hebrew Scriptures, Gospels, and Letters of the early Apostles.
- Christians vary in their organizational structures and understanding of church authority.

Christianity in the United States

Importance of Religion in the lives of Christians:

- Very 68%
- Somewhat 25%

Marital Status among Christians

- Married 52%
- Divorced/Separated 14%
- Never Married 21%

Source: Pew Research Center, Religion in Public Life, 2019,
<https://www.pewforum.org/religious-landscape-study/>



What are your first thoughts when someone says the words, “Muslim” and or “Islam”?

Muslim Community in the United States

- About 1-2% of total US population (Pew Research Center)
- Most diverse faith group in US (Gallup, Muslim West Facts Project)
- Largest groups are South Asian & Arab immigrants & African Americans (Pew, 2017)
- 75% are immigrant or children of immigrants
- 82% are American citizens
- Growing number of White, Latino & Caribbean converts. Fastest growing religious group in the world (Pew, 2017)

Islam in the United States

- Muslims (literally “one who submits” [to God]) are followers of the religion of Islam
- Muslims believe in all prophets of Judaism & Christianity (Abrahamic tradition)
- Muslims believe in One God (Arabic name is Allah), & the last prophet is Muhammad (571-632 AD)
- The Qur’an (divine book) describes women & men as “partners” (9:72) and “garments for one another” (2:187), and identifies mutual love & mercy as the foundations of marriage with the goal of tranquility (30:21).

Q. What are unique ways that people of faith experience domestic violence?

Ways DV Presents for Survivors in Faith Communities



Q. What are barriers that prevent people of faith from seeking services?

Societal Barriers

- Patriarchy
- Community and family pressure
- Immigration Issues
- Islamaphobia
- Systemic Racism

Individual Barriers

- Abuser is well respected/well connected in the faith community
- Misunderstanding of religious texts
- Stigma of seeking services
- Fear of losing custody of children
- Socioeconomic status
- Feelings of shame
- Fear of losing Faith Community

**Q. What are ways to support
DV survivors of faith?**

Solutions for Advocates

- Ask the survivor how you can help with spiritual concerns
- Work within survivor's worldview rather than imposing external values
- Use language & values that are familiar to survivor
- Allow survivor to determine goals (e.g. stay, leave, separate, divorce)

Poll Question: Have you
ever worked with a Faith
Leader?

Outreach to Faith Leaders

- Recognize that partnering adds credibility and increases access
- Know which faiths are represented in your community
- Identify local champions to make introductions
- Visit faith leaders & discuss the problem of domestic violence
- Offer training and resources
- Arrange a DV faith-specific program and invite faith leader to answer religious questions

Summary

- Faith leaders have been organized on issue since at least 1975
- Interfaith Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (group of 40)
A four part series to discuss how racism and misogyny impacts survivors ability to seek safety and justice, Register here: www.interfaithagainstdv.org/events
- Clergy Task Force on Domestic Abuse in the Jewish Community
- National Catholic DVAM Partners Committee
- National Imam trainings - Peaceful Families Project
- HEART - national organization tofferes trainings and programs to respond to sexual violence in the Muslim cmmunity

Honoring Survivors' Spiritual Needs:
Supporting Jewish, Catholic, and Muslim
Survivors of Domestic Violence

Questions and Answers

Contacts



Deborah Rosenbloom
drosenbloom@jwi.org
www.jwi.org
interfaithagainstdv.org



Sharon A. O'Brien
sharon@catholicsforfamilypeace.org
www.catholicsforfamilypeace.org



Saman Quraeshi
secretary@peacefulfamilies.org
www.peacefulfamilies.org

DVAM National Call for Unity 2020

October 1, 2020 at
3:00pm ET

Join us as we come together in
solidarity with survivors, advocates,
and partners from national, state and
community-based organizations.





Connect with us:



Call: 1-800-537-2238



Email: nrcdvTA@nrcdv.org



Follow: @NRCDV



Like: @NRCDV



Blog: nationaldvam.tumblr.com



Post: [instagram.com/nrcdv/](https://www.instagram.com/nrcdv/)

The National Resource Center on Domestic Violence (www.nrcdv.org) provides a wide range of free, comprehensive, and individualized technical assistance, training, and specialized resource materials. Access our publications online at VAWnet.org