

# ECONOMIC ABUSE FACT SHEET

## Action Plan for Practitioners and Advocates

### Identify

#### Scale of Economic Abuse (SEA-12)

Utilized in the screening of economic abuse victims, the SEA-12 identifies the frequency of economic abuse experienced in relationships.

This scale is comprised of three categories:

- *Economic Control* (5 items)
- *Employment Sabotage* (4 items)
- *Economic Exploitation* (3 items).

#### What is Economic Empowerment?

*Economic empowerment comes from gaining independence over one's own financial capital.*

*Increasing assets and income, as well as acquiring knowledge and the ability to control one's own financial capital, can enhance economic empowerment.*

### Advocate

#### Practitioners should utilize best practices to economically empower survivors.

Educating survivors about economic abuse tactics including those that are controlling, exploitative, or employment sabotage activities should be part of economic advocacy efforts.

Providing information on economic abuse and promoting economic justice will provide survivors with a greater understanding of how abusers control them economically.

*"It is critical to understand the factors that increase abusers' risk of perpetration and to identify pathways that lead to perpetration in order to design appropriate intervention strategies to address these issues."*<sup>2</sup>

*"Advocates should be prepared to offer financial tools and strategies in an effort to increase survivors' economic self-sufficiency."*<sup>5</sup>

### Intervene

#### Financial Education Programs

These programs provide financial education to increase knowledge about financial management skills.

Topics covered include: money and power, developing a cost-of-living plan, building and repairing credit, banking and investing, oppression and economic abuse, economic abuse and relationships, financial fundamentals, creating long-term financial success, and strategies for immigrants/refugees.

#### Asset Building Programs

The use of these programs is one of the most effective ways to build economic security and safety from abuse. These programs are based on the asset-based theory, which states that having assets stimulates and facilitates the development of human capital and thereby indirectly contributes to the economic empowerment of impoverished people.

#### References

- <sup>1</sup>Hahn, S.A. and Postmus, J.L. (2014). Economic empowerment of impoverished IPV survivors: A review of best practice literature and implications for policy. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse, 15*(2), 79-93.  
<sup>2</sup>Huang, C.C., Postmus, J.L., Vikse, J.H., and Wang, L.R. (2013). Economic abuse, physical violence, and union formation. *Children and Youth Services Review, 35*, 780-786.  
<sup>3</sup>Mathisen-Stylianou, A., Postmus, J.L., and McMahon, S. (2013). Measuring abusive behaviors: Is economic abuse a unique form of abuse? *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 28*(16), 3186-3204.  
<sup>4</sup>Postmus, J.L., Huang, C.C., and Mathisen-Stylianou, A. (2012). The impact of physical and economic abuse on maternal mental health and parenting. *Children and Youth Services Review, 34*, 1922-1928.  
<sup>5</sup>Postmus, J.L., Plummer, S.B., McMahon, S., Murshid, N.S., and Kim, M.S. (2012). Understanding economic abuse in the lives of survivors. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 27*(3), 411-430.