

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & PREGNANCY

Pregnancy can be an especially dangerous time for people in abusive relationships, and abuse can often begin or escalate during the pregnancy.



Power and control:

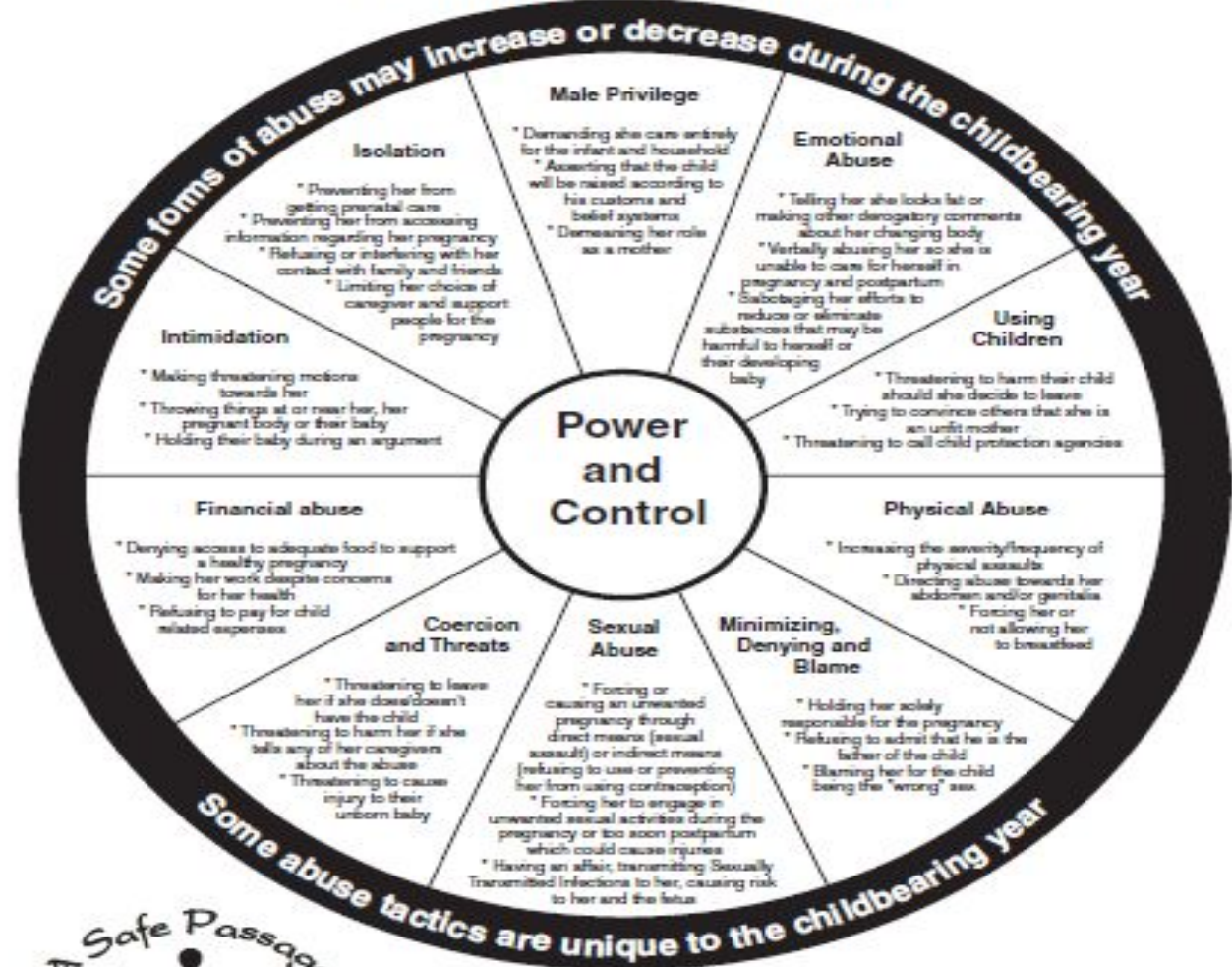
- Resentful and jealous that attention shifting from them to the pregnancy.
- Stressed at the thought of financially supporting a child
- Frustrated at the increased responsibilities
- Angry that their partner's body is changing

The period immediately following childbirth can be immensely joyful for new parents.

It is also often overwhelming to deal with the care of a new baby and adapt your lifestyle to what that entails.

For parents with an abusive partner, this time is often a period of escalated stress and danger.

Woman Abuse in the Childbearing Year Power and Control Wheel



supporting Women Survivors of Abuse through the childbearing year

www.asafepassage.info

Although one of the best predictors of abuse in pregnancy is previous abuse, as many as 40%* of women who reported abuse in pregnancy, stated that the abuse started when they became pregnant. Abuse in pregnancy involves tactics that are unique to the childbearing year during a time when women are more physically and emotionally vulnerable.

*Statistical reference: Statistics Canada: Violence Against Women Survey: Survey Highlights 1992-93/94 36/37 1-25

Power and Control Wheel adapted from the Domestic Violence Intervention Project, Duluth, MN, USA
www.duluth-model.org

Reproductive Coercion:

Reproductive coercion is a form of power and control where one partner strips the other of the ability to control their own reproductive system.

It is sometimes difficult to identify this coercion because other forms of abuse are often occurring simultaneously.

2011: First national survey to learn the extent of reproductive coercion. The findings were shocking. Over 3,000 callers participated in the survey and 25% reported that they had experienced this type of abuse.



Reproductive coercion can be exerted in many ways:

- Refusing to use a condom or other type of birth control
- Breaking or removing a condom during intercourse
- Lying about their methods of birth control
- Refusing to “pull out” if that is the agreed upon method of birth control
- Forcing their partner to not use any birth control
- Removing birth control methods
- Sabotaging birth control methods
- Withholding finances needed to purchase birth control
- Monitoring their partner’s menstrual cycles
- Purposefully trying to pass on a sexually transmitted disease
- Forcing pregnancy / not supporting partner’s decision about when or if they want to have a child
- Forcing partner to get an abortion, or preventing them from getting one
- Threaten or act out violently if don’t comply with their wishes to end or continue a pregnancy
- Continually keeping their partner pregnant