

A Viewer's Guide to *A Survivor's Story*

Objectives

- ❖ Build understanding of domestic violence, child abuse and sexual assault issues
- ❖ Explore the impact of domestic violence from the perspective of a child
- ❖ Examine the impact of trauma and natural coping mechanisms of survivors
- ❖ Provoke multi-disciplinary discussion of issues and interventions
- ❖ Provide victims and survivors with
 - a decreased sense of isolation;
 - a vehicle for further discussing their own experience;
 - potential new insight into their own experience;
 - a better understanding of their own children's experience.

Potential Audiences

- ❖ Staffs of:
 - Domestic Violence Programs
 - Child Advocacy Organizations and Child Protection Agencies
 - Sexual Assault Programs
 - Law Enforcement Agencies
 - School Systems
- ❖ Judges
- ❖ Prosecutors
- ❖ Faith-Based Organizations
- ❖ Community Groups
- ❖ Multi-Disciplinary Groups
- ❖ Clients

Suggested Uses

Internal staff trainings * Multidisciplinary trainings * Roll Call *
Discussion Groups * Conferences * Client Screenings

Sample Discussion Questions

Segment One: *Witnessing*

- What is the impact of domestic violence on children?
- Does it matter if they witness the violence or not? Does their age make any difference?
- What can you do to assist these children?
- How do you work with mothers who are battered?
- What strengths do you see in this case?
- What most stands out for you about this segment?

Segment Two: *Childhood*

- Should the children have been removed? Why/why not?
- What assistance would you have sought for them?
- Who would you talk to in order to provide assistance?
- Should Child Protective Services (CPS) respond with Law Enforcement? Why/why not?
- Do CPS liability and timelines play a role in removal when there is a concern for the child's safety? Why/why not?
- What most stands out for you about this segment?

Segment Three: *Adolescence*

- Could Olga's victimization as an adolescent have been prevented? How?
- What do you currently do – and what more can you do – to address this situation?
- How would you intervene with this family?
- Discuss how Olga coped. Does her description of dissociation make sense? Accommodation? Have you encountered others who used these coping strategies? Did they differ from Olga? How?
- What most stands out for you about this segment?

Segment Four: *Healing*

- What is your experience with clients and the healing process?
- How have you worked with survivors who dissociate?
- Has suicidal ideation been an issue?
- What most stands out for you about this segment?
- Are you encouraged or discouraged by Olga's story? Why?