If you become a victim of domestic violence *(...continued)*

- Save all the evidence (proof) you can. (You may even want to take photographs of your injuries.) Whether or not you file charges now, you may later change your mind and will then need proof that you have been assaulted.

A way out

Everyone has the right to be safe from threats and beatings — but *you* must take that first step. Once you recognize that it *isn't your fault* and it is possible to change your situation, seek the help you need to correct your situation.

Help available

If you need help, look in the yellow pages of your telephone directory under "Women's Services and Organizations." If nothing is listed, look under the name of your city or county for departments of family services, social services, health or welfare. These agencies can offer help to you or refer you to someone who can. Also, check the white pages of your telephone book under the heading "Crisis." Many areas have crisis hot lines that are answered 24 hours a day.

Remember that your local police and sheriff's departments exist to help you. You should always have their number handy for an emergency situation. Other sources of help and/or referral are the Salvation Army or your private physician or attorney. Also, look in the yellow pages under "Attorney Referral Service" or "Legal Assistance" or "Bar Association" if you have a low income and need a lawyer.

For further information on this program and other crime prevention material, write to:

Crime and Violence Prevention Center
California Attorney General's Office
P.O. Box 944255
Sacramento, CA 94244-2550

http://caag.state.ca.us/cvpc

Provided by:

Torrance Police Department
Mark A. Matsuda
Chief of Police
310/328-3456

Community Affairs
310/618-6391 or 310/618-6392

3300 Civic Center Drive
Torrance, CA 90503

Domestic Violence

Crime & Violence Prevention

California Attorney General's Office
BILL LOCKYER
Attorney General

Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is more than just a "family problem" — it is a crime!

In California, it is a crime for any person to threaten, beat, sexually assault or otherwise harm another person, even if they are married.

Battering is not exclusively a crime against women, but they are the majority of victims; thus this publication is primarily directed to the battered wife or woman.

Although we have few statistics on the incidence of domestic violence, we do know that:

- Approximately 30 percent of female homicide victims in the United States are killed by their husbands or boyfriends.
- Females are much more likely than males to be killed by their spouse.
- Domestic violence affects at least one out of every four American families.

Why do they stay?

The most frequently asked question concerning a battering situation is why does she stay? While reasons range from children, love, guilt, fear, pride, embarrassment, financial dependence — or a combination thereof — it is very possible the woman may be locked into a violence cycle.

Three-phase theory of family violence

The family violence cycle consists of three phases: the tension-building phase, the acute-battering incident and the loving reconciliation.

- **Tension-Building Phase**
  During this phase the woman senses her mate's increasing tension. He is "edgy" and perhaps challenges her and tells her she is stupid, incompetent, etc. The woman may internalize her appropriate anger at the man's unfairness and experience physical effects such as depression, tension, anxiety and headaches. As the tension in the relationship increases, minor episodes of violence increase, such as pinching, slapping or shoving.

- **Acute-Battering Incident**
  The tension-building phase ends in an explosion of violence. The woman may or may not fight back. Following the battering, she is in a state of physical and psychological shock. The man may discount the episode and underestimate the woman's injuries.

- **Loving Reconciliation**
  During the last phase of the family violence cycle, both parties have a sense of relief that "it's over." The man is often genuinely sorry for what happened and is fearful that his partner will leave him. He apologizes and may "shower" her with love and praise that helps her repair her shattered self-esteem. He tells her he can't live without her, so she feels responsible for his well-being and guilty for her actions and blames herself for what led up to the abuse.

Increasing spiral of violence

Once violence has begun, it continues to increase in both frequency and severity. Understanding the psychological consequences of her violent relationship can help the woman take power and choose constructive alternatives, as well as aid those who intervene to help her.

If you become a victim of domestic violence

- Make sure you are safe from another beating. Whenever you believe you are in danger, leave your home and take your children with you. Also, take important papers such as your birth certificate, vehicle registration, etc.
- Get medical attention. Don't try to treat yourself; you may be injured much more seriously than you realize.
- Seek assistance. Whether or not you file charges against your batterer, you may need to talk to a professional about your situation. Contact your local battered women's shelter, women's support group or victim's assistance center.

Continued on back