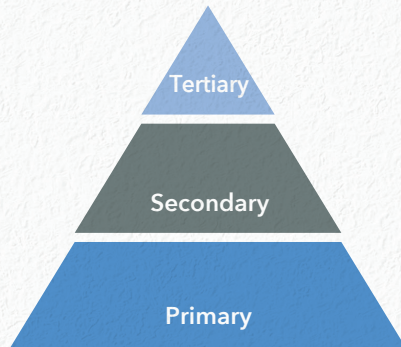


## Primary Prevention for Churches

### What is primary prevention?



Any Action, strategy or policy that works to stop domestic violence from occurring in the first place. Primary prevention seeks to reduce the overall likelihood that anyone will become a victim or perpetrator of domestic violence by creating conditions that make violence less likely to occur.

### Potential prevention levels

Primary prevention should holistically address factors at all levels of society.



- **Individual:** Personal empowerment
- **Relationship:** Healthy relationships
- **Community:** Equitable and supportive environments
- **Societal:** Engaging and mobilizing people for action

### Prevention strategies

The following are actionable steps you can take to prevent domestic violence:

- Teach safe and healthy relationships
- Engage influential peers and adults
- Disrupt pathways that lead to violence
- Create protective environments
- Strengthen economic support for families
- Support survivors to reduce harm

### The spectrum of prevention

This outlines seven strategies promoted by the CDC that take into account multiple determinants of domestic violence. Church leaders should take into account all seven when possible

- **Influencing policy and legislation:** Reflect community efforts in advocacy for broad anti-violence goals.
- **Mobilizing neighborhoods and communities:** Entire communities focusing on prevention will maximize efforts to inhibit violence.
- **Changing organizational practices:** Make your church safe for everyone by implementing organizational policies that demonstrate “no tolerance” for harassment or violence.
- **Fostering coalitions and networks:** Ensure every community sector is represented and involved in prevention.
- **Educating providers:** Reach a critical group who has daily contact with people at high risk.
- **Promoting community education:** Build an influential mass of people who will become involved in prevention.
- **Strengthening individual knowledge/skills:** Individuals can take action when they know how to recognize and prevent DV.

### Bystander intervention for violent behavior

Empower others to take action in primary prevention by knowing red flags and signs of abuse and speaking up:

- Demonstrating jealousy
- Diminishing their partner
- Blaming others/making excuses for their behavior
- Controlling partner’s time and activities
- Adhering to rigid gender roles and viewing partner as inferior

To learn more about preventing domestic violence in your church, or if someone needs assistance, call the **Sheltering Wings 24/7 helpline at (317) 745-1496**.

SHELTERING WINGS

