



# Domestic Violence A W A R E N E S S

## T H E M E I N T R O D U C T I O N

By Mary M. Lovik and Rebecca E. Shiemke

**T**he State Bar's Domestic Violence Committee proudly sponsors this special issue on domestic violence, highlighting advocacy concerns, resources, innovative Michigan programs, and laws in Michigan and other states. As the lead article explains, the term "domestic violence" can encompass various contexts of violence involving intimate partners. This issue focuses on battering, in which the perpetrator purposefully uses an ongoing pattern of coercive, oppressive behavior to control a partner.

Effective responses to battering prioritize safety for children and abused individuals, and accountability for perpetrators. To achieve these goals, helping professionals seek to restore autonomy and control to those who have survived abuse. These professionals often refer to their clients as "survivors" in recognition of the strength and resourcefulness needed to cope with violence

and oppression. Some of the authors in this issue refer to the survivor as "she" and the batterer as "he," reflecting the reality that most (but not all) battering is men's coercion of women.

Because batterers exert control over every aspect of their partners' lives, survivors need assistance on many fronts. To assist survivors and their attorneys in finding helpful resources, this issue includes a tear-out list of helping agencies and other sources of information (see page 45). The Domestic Violence Committee hopes that readers will use this list as a reference and share it with their clients. ■

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