

To: Those Who Wish to Use PREP's Self-Referral Document

From: PREP, Inc. (7/7/04)

Subject: Referral tool to be used as a handout for your workshop participants

One of the important opportunities that can grow out of your marital education efforts is that those attending can learn of other resources that may help participants in their desires to live happier, healthier, and more effective lives.

At PREP, we do *not* assume that all of what a couple or individual may need is included in our curriculum, nor is it included in any other. Some people you see in your workshops may benefit from any number of other services that are beyond the scope of your particular relationship education class. For example, an attendee may have a substance abuse problem, suffer from clinical depression, or may be involved in a pattern of domestic violence. These are very complex clinical issues that are subject areas beyond the scope of the an educational program.

The simple fact is there will likely be some people in your audience who could use more help in any number of areas of which you may not be aware. For this reason, we have crafted a generic referral document for your use. **We advise you to add relevant local referral information by stapling local and state contact information for your region to this handout. The "Getting More Help . . ." form from PREP, Inc. itself is not to be changed or modified in any way for any use. You may use it as is, however, in your work.**

We think it is important that you stress to your audience that each person receives this document with a message that you distribute it because some people in group might find it useful to seek some further or more intense help in some area of concern or struggle.' By doing this, you give everyone who attends some very basic information about situations where further help might be needed, and how they might seek these services in your community. The key is not to single anybody out but to increase awareness of resources for everyone.

Instructions (to You, the workshop leaders) for use:

1. We recommend that you hand this out (*the next two pages, NOT this page*) to all participants in the first session, and make it clear that this is routine. You will need to make copies for your participants using the version you have been given.

2. We recommend that you look into what services are available in your community and list the resource name and contact information where indicated. Some examples might be; a) county mental health centers; b) the county health department; c) county extension services; d) local domestic violence resources; or e) private counseling centers that specialize in couples therapy. If you include religiously linked services, please note the affiliation as part of the information so your participants will have information about who they were calling if they chose to do so.

3. Attach your list of local resources to the unaltered document from PREP, Inc.

We hope that you will find this tool useful to you in your work. We are confident that helping people seek other services when needed is on of the most powerful things you can do to help families in your communities.

Getting More Help When There Are Serious Problems

The workshop you are taking is an educational program that teaches you skills and principles that can help you build strong and healthy marriages, and couple or family relationships. However, it is not designed to address serious relationship and individual problems.

Since you are taking this time to think more about your life and relationships, it may also be a good time to think about other services that you or others you care about may need. **We provide this sheet of information to ALL couples and individuals in these workshops so that you will be aware of other available services.**

Even if your main goal right now is to improve your marriage or relationship, difficulties in other areas could make it that much harder to make your relationship work. Likewise, if you are having really severe problems in your relationship, it can make dealing with any of these other problems that much harder.

The good news is that participating in this workshop can be a gateway to getting other services. It can provide you with awareness, motivation and tools to help you take other steps to improve your life. Here are some areas where seeking additional help could be really important for you and your family.

Financial Problems

- Serious money problems make everything else harder.
- Unemployment/job loss can be one of the key sources of conflict and stress for couples.
- While this workshop can help you as a couple to work more as a team, you may need more help to learn to manage your finances or find a job.

Serious Marital or Other Family Problems or Stresses

- If you have serious marital or adult relationship problems where more help is needed that can be provided in this educational workshop, you can seek counseling from someone who specializes in helping couples.
- Coping with a serious, life threatening or chronic illness or disability in a child or adult can place a lot of stress on caregivers and their family relationships. Community resources often exist to help families with these kinds of issues.

Substance Abuse, Addictions and Other Compulsive Behaviors

- No matter what else you have to deal with in life, it will be harder if you or your partner, or another close family member, has a substance abuse problem.
- Drug or alcohol abuse and addiction robs a person of the ability to handle life well, have close relationships, and be a good parent.
- Alcohol abuse can also make it harder to control anger and violence.
- Other problems families sometimes face include eating disorders, sexual addictions, and gambling.

You need to decide to get help with these problems to make your life better and the life of those you love. It will make it easier if your partner or spouse supports this decision.

Mental Health Problems

- Mental health problems come in many forms, from anxiety to depression to schizophrenia, and place a great deal of stress on couple and family relationships.
- Depression is particularly common when there are serious relationship problems.

- Having thoughts of suicide is often a sign of depression. Seek help if you struggle with such thoughts.

The good news is that there are now many effective treatments for mental health problems with services available in all counties, including options for those with less means to pay.

Domestic Aggression and Violence

- While domestic violence can take many forms, *the key is doing whatever is needed to make sure you and your children are safe.*
- While domestic aggression and violence of any sort is wrong and dangerous, experts now recognize different types, for example:
 - Some couples have arguments that get out of control, with frustration spilling over into pushing, shoving or slapping. This can be dangerous, especially if you don't take strong measures to stop the patterns from continuing.
 - The type of domestic violence that is usually the most dangerous of all and least likely to change is when a male uses aggression and force to scare and control a woman. Verbal abuse, threats of harm, and/or forced sexual activity can be part of this pattern.
- This workshop/program is not a treatment program for physical aggression. If you are dealing with aggression and violence in your relationship, you need more help than what can be offered in this program. That might mean seeking marital or relationship counseling or seeking the advice of domestic violence experts.
- If you have any questions about the safety of your relationship, you should contact a domestic violence program or hot line, especially if you feel like you are in danger of being harmed.

The bottom line is doing what you need to do to assure that you and your children are safe. If you ever feel you are in immediate danger from your partner or others, call 911 for help or contact your Domestic Violence hot line.

Where Can We Get More Help?

If you, your partner, or your relationship experiences any of these special problems, we strongly recommend that you get more help.

Your workshop leaders may have attached additional contact information for some resources in your area. You can also ask your leaders directly (in person or by phone) if you would like any other suggestions.

National Resources:

A national domestic violence hotline: SAFELINE 1-800-799-7233

A national website with links for help with substance abuse and mental health issues:
www.samhsa.gov/public/look_frame.html

A national hotline for referrals to substance abuse treatment: 1-800-662-HELP

A national hotline for suicide prevention:
 National Hopeline Network
 1-800-SUICIDE (784-2433)

Local Resources To Consider:

There are community mental health centers in all areas of the U. S. Other counseling centers and mental health professionals are often available as well (both non-religious and religious). Also, both clergy and family physicians are usually well aware of resources for various needs in their communities, so consider asking them for suggestions.

This handout was produced and is distributed by PREP, Inc. Input was provided by the Oklahoma Marriage Initiative along with Scott Stanley, Howard Markman, Theodora Ooms, Natalie Jenkins, and Bruce Carruth. Special thanks to both Marcia Smith, the executive director of the Oklahoma Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, for her feedback and recommendations, and to Larry Didier, Prevention Programs Coordinator for the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services.

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