

## Domestic Abuse in Latinx/Immigrant Communities

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Worldwide, 1 in 3 Latinas have experienced domestic abuse, but 60% of them do not report it (*Casa de Esperanza*). Though domestic violence exists in all racial/ethnic groups, Latinx and immigrant victims face a more difficult time managing abusive relationships because of concerns including: immigration status, language barriers, and family/social backlash.

This lack of knowledge about their legal rights and protections might prevent an immigrant from seeking help. Abusive partners can use the victim's immigration status as a source of control by threatening deportation and/or separation from their children and causing a loss of economic opportunity. Furthermore, the belief that protections in U.S. legal system do not apply to them creates more fear for immigrant victims involved in abusive relationships.

It is therefore crucial for domestic violence victims in the Latinx/immigrant community to know there is help that meets their needs, from cultural to legal services. All victims have a right to safety planning, referrals, shelter, restraining orders, and other services and resources to keep them safe. Women's Support Services offers these supports to victims of domestic abuse regardless of gender, immigration status or financial condition. WSS serves the Northwest corner of Connecticut and the border towns in New York and can help connect clients to the appropriate resources and agencies. WSS is free of charge, and does not report to ICE.

We all must recognize the issues of domestic violence in the Latinx community and bring attention to resources our community has to offer.