

# NATIONAL EMERGENCY NURSES ASSOCIATION



Position Statement	Family Violence
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## Issue

Family violence is recognized as a widespread community, cultural and societal health problem that is punishable by law. Family violence involves child, spouse/significant other, elder abuse, or anyone in a dependant relationship, and physical aggression between siblings or against parents and/or any combination, or anyone in a dependent relationship. It also involves financial exploitation and deprivation of the frail or vulnerable. It includes verbal, physical, emotional, psychological, spiritual, financial, and sexual abuse, and neglect.

## NENA Position

NENA believes that the Emergency Nurse has the responsibility to provide a safe environment free of abuse or neglect for all individuals receiving or requiring care.

NENA supports the use of forensically trained nurses, such as sexual assault nurse examiners (SANE), forensic nurse examiners (FNE), and other specialized care providers, to assist in the care of patients experiencing intimate partner violence.

NENA supports the concept of health promotion and prevention and endorses programs that have these concepts as their mandate.

NENA supports the use of nurses to vigorously explore the protection needs of minors who may be at risk in a household where intimate partner violence occurs.

NENA believes that Emergency Nurses have the responsibility to identify situations involving family violence and initiate appropriate referrals. This includes referrals to appropriate agency departments and external organizations according to jurisdictional statutes and agency policies.

NENA supports awareness of community and provincial resources available to patients requiring protection upon discharge.

NENA believes the Emergency Nurse must take an active role in the intervention, education, prevention, and research in family violence to promote healthy family relationships.

NENA supports the use of universal screening for family violence.

## Rationale

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The Emergency Nurse may provide immediate physical care, emotional support, and appropriate referral to services. The “Cycle of Violence” with the inherent resistance to change suggests that victims may repeatedly experience violence before they are capable of taking steps to avail themselves of available resources.

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