

# Power, Inequality and Family Policy

## Abusive families

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Name and date begun:

### **Time allocation:**

3 lessons

### **Learning objectives:**

- Students should understand that families can be dangerous places for children, women and men.
- Students should appreciate that abuse arises from inequalities of power and wealth in families.
- Students should recognise that the reality of family life for many and family ideologies are a sphere of conflict.

### **Key Concepts and vocabulary**

See your lesson notes for a list of the key terms. These must be learned in addition to the following:

- Abuse
- Patriarchy
- Violence
- Domination
- Dark side of family
- Social policy

### **Additional reading and references**

Haralambos and Holbourn (1995) *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives 4<sup>th</sup> Edition* p 351 – 69

You may need to look in the library or to contact social welfare agencies via the Internet or the telephone directory to see what you can find out. This is under-researched and not widely disseminated material.

**Make a note of any additional sources that you have used below**

### **Personal Development ideas**

- Do not ask people for personal experiences. This is completely unacceptable and unethical.
- Refer to welfare agencies via the Internet.
- Look up radical feminism and interactional studies to discover what you can about this field of study.

### **Overview of the debate**

- What are the difficulties in defining abuse?
- Why is family abuse such an important sociological topic?
- What does the study of abuse bring to our understanding of the dynamics of family relationships?
- What does feminism bring to the discussion?

### **Revision tips**

- Be sure that you fully understand the different categories of abuse.
- What mechanisms does society have for protecting victims?
- Why are victims unwilling to admit to abuse? What does this tell us about family relationships in our society?
- What social policies may Governments have to review or consider in the light of the evidence of abuse that is taking place in our society?

### **What you should have in your folder when this work has been completed correctly:**

- A clear explanation of each of the glossary terms
- Acceptable lesson notes.
- Evidence that you have looked at least two textbooks and made notes.
- Evidence that you have collected data from the Internet
- Evidence that you have looked in social welfare texts or contacted organisations which deal with the victims or perpetrators of abuse.
- Information collected from newspapers and magazines which tell stories of abusive partnerships.