

## The Economic Impact of Abuse

*74% of survivors **stayed with an abuser longer** due to financial issues, according to shelter and transitional housing staff.*

*Victims of sexual violence or stalking at school are **more likely to drop out** of school.*

*Survivors **lose 8 million days** of paid work annually.*

*Rape can cost victims more than **\$145,000** in health care, lost wages and justice system costs over the lifetime.*

## Economic Security and Survivor Safety

Survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking and dating violence often experience economic challenges that can have a devastating lasting impact on their ability to recover from an act of violence, leave an abusive situation or achieve financial independence. As a result of violence or abuse, survivors may face:

- Dependency on the abuser to provide for basic needs for her or her family
- Job loss or lost wages due to interference from the abuser at work or time off to recover from abuse
- Unfinished education/ training due to missed classes or relocation
- Eviction and damaged tenant history due to law enforcement involvement
- Debt from healthcare, moving costs, the justice system, replacing property
- Damaged credit from abusers trying to financially cripple the survivor
- Loss of personal property

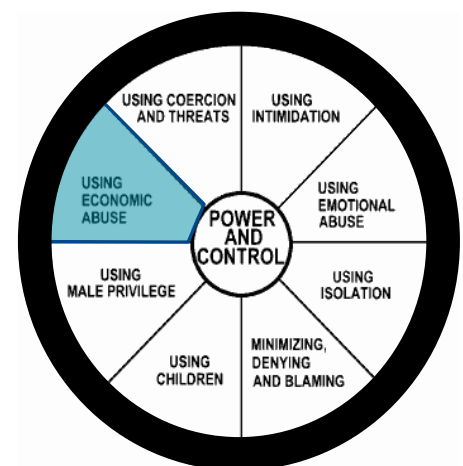
In addition, economic abuses, such as the unauthorized use of financial resources, falsification of records or coercion into crime, have long been used by abusers as a tool of power and control. Combined with today's high cost of living, shortage of good jobs and diminished safety net, these costs of abuse severely limit survivors' options to achieve safety and justice.

Survivors who are able to preserve and build their economic security are better able to insulate themselves from immediate and future harm. When policies and programs effectively respond to the economic aspects of violence, survivors are more likely to escape and fully recover from intimate partner violence, sexual violence, stalking and dating violence.

## The Economic Security for Survivors Project (ESS)

Building off of WOW's expertise in promoting women's economic security and gender equity, the [Economic Security for Survivors \(ESS\) Project](#) identifies barriers that threaten survivor economic security and safety, and offers solutions based on data and proven best practices. The ESS Project provides justice system and community professionals with strategies, tools, education and training to improve how programs, policies and communities respond to the economic consequences of abuse and support the economic security of survivors.

Since 2010, over 1,700 advocates, victim service specialists and criminal justice professionals have received ESS web-based trainings and resources to support efforts to address survivor economic security. ESS has also worked with 20 partners across 12 states to educate key stakeholders and build partnerships to form a more comprehensive coordinated community response, achieve greater justice through prosecution of economic crimes, and enhance economic advocacy within transitional housing programs.



## About WOW

Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW) works nationally to build pathways to economic independence and equality of opportunity for America's families, women and girls.

Since 1964, WOW has helped women through programs emphasizing job quality, gender equity and economic security across the lifespan. Recognized nationally for its training, technical assistance and advocacy, WOW remains integrally involved in national workforce and welfare policy debates, and works closely with partners to advocate for full integration of federal, state and local policies.

For more information, visit [www.wowonline.org](http://www.wowonline.org).

## Contact us for more information or to request technical assistance:

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## ESS Project Resources

All of the ESS Project resources can be found online at: <http://www.wowonline.org/resources/economic-security-for-survivors-project-ess/>

**Economic Security and Safety Guide for the STOP Grant Program.** The STOP Guide provides data on the link between survivor safety and economic security and examines how the STOP grant program can respond to the challenges they pose to survivor safety. Organized by Program Purpose Area, the STOP Guide outlines how survivor economic security can be incorporated into the work of each STOP sector: law enforcement, prosecutors, courts and advocates.

**Justice System Sector Guide Series.** Building on the STOP Guide, this user-friendly series of four sector-specific guides provides information and support for Law Enforcement, Prosecutors, Courts and Advocates so that they may better support a victim's economic security. Each Guide offers specific tactics and hands-on tools to address economic security within the existing job responsibilities of justice system professionals at multiple levels.

**Economic and Employment Advocacy Curriculum.** This free 12-part course is divided into three units: Pathways to Economic Security, Financial Recovery and Growth, and Addressing Barriers to Economic Security. Topics covered include how to match survivors' skills to good jobs in growing fields and market themselves to employers, how to recover the cost of economic abuse and how to support survivors with significant barriers to employment. The course can be accessed at: [wow.mrooms.net](http://wow.mrooms.net)

**Getting Started: A Handbook to Address Economic Security for Survivors.** The Handbook is a step-by-step tool on how to comprehensively address the economic security of survivors. It equips case managers and direct service staff with the information and resources they need to counsel survivors in economic self-sufficiency and career planning, covering each step of preparing survivors for career success, including assessment, education and training, and employment.

**Justice System Policy Brief Series.** This series of policies briefs highlights best practices in addressing economic security for survivors within the justice system. The series includes: Safety and Economic Security Primer; Restitution; Protection Orders; and Arrest Policies. Each brief defines the issue, presents statistics, and highlights the related federal and state policies.

**Population Policy Brief Series.** The Population Policy Brief Series examines and offers recommendations for the distinct barriers that underserved survivors face in building economic security, escaping or recovering from abuse, and seeking support and justice. The series includes: Survivors of Color, Rural Survivors, LGBTQ Survivors, Youth, Elder Survivors and Native Survivors.

