

# CHECKUP:

## Nearly 1 in 3 women suffer abuse in home

FROM B1

anonymously or not, Mbilinyi said, although if a caller recounts a crime, he will be urged to report it to police while the clinician is still on the line.

Using the phone provides a free, unobtrusive way for men concerned about their behaviors to talk to a professional, said Joan Zegree, an adjunct faculty member of the University of Washington School of Social Work.

"That experience can encourage someone to get into a certified treatment program," she said.

Nearly one in three American women identify themselves as victims of violence or sexual assault at the hands of a husband or boyfriend at some point in their lives.

Each year in Washington state, police respond to an average of 51,000 domestic violence-related calls.

Zegree said men who engage in domestic abuse can be of any color, creed or age.

"I'll tell you a secret about these men — they're not who you may think," she said.

Mark Huston, a Seattle telecom professional, was one of those men. Huston struggled to control his violent behavior toward his family before he had to spend a weekend in jail for pushing his wife onto a couch.

"I hurt my wife, I hurt my kids, I hurt myself," he said. "I know other men like me are out there. Too many of us wait until we are hauled off to jail before we confront our behavior."

Huston believes a program such as the men's domestic abuse checkup would have helped him sooner.

"I would have happily reached out to some program if I knew it was there at the time," he said. "I'm not proud of what happened to me, but I'm very, very glad I was able to get help for it."

Advertisements encouraging men to participate in the study will appear in local newspapers and on Metro buses.

"She's afraid of you," one ad reads. "Does it have to be that way?"

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**P-I reporter Blythe Lawrence can be reached at 206-448-8312 or [blythelawrence@seattlepi.com](mailto:blythelawrence@seattlepi.com).**