

Casa de Esperanza Training: Responding to the Emerging Issues Facing Immigrant Survivors of Domestic Violence and Their Families

Scenario #2

- Numerous stories have been reported in the media and by advocates of the detrimental impact of increasing entanglement between local law enforcement officials and federal immigration enforcement efforts. Read this scenario, which is based on a true story reported in the Sacramento newspaper, and then answer the questions below.

Maria Perez-Rivera, age 21, got into a fight with her boyfriend, Vicente Tellez, on a Saturday night. The next morning, when her sister wanted to go to church with her and saw the bruises and scratches on her face and body, she called the police. Her family says she had been beaten repeatedly. When the police were in contact later with Vicente he gave his version; he had scratches and a cut lip and possible bite mark. Bradley, the police spokesman said, "It looks like the argument escalated into mutual combat; that's why she was arrested as well." Each was charged with felony domestic violence. Neither Maria nor Vicente had had prior contact with the police.

When they were booked into the jail on felony charges, their fingerprints had been sent to ICE under the federal government's partnership with local law enforcement, Secure Communities, designed to identify "criminal aliens" for possible removal. ICE issued a detainer. The police referred the case to the District Attorney's Office which decided not to prosecute. Two days later the ICE van picked them up in the detention facility and they were deported to Mexico.

Maria had been told no bond was possible and that she would have to stay in jail for an indefinite amount of time without her kids. She did not have an attorney. She waived her right to an immigration hearing and signed documents agreeing to voluntarily depart the United States. She was deported to Mexico later that day. Maria's mother quit her job at the cherry packing plant to care for her grandchildren, Maria's 2-year-old daughter and 3-month-old son, who were left behind. Vicente is the father of the younger child, but her daughter has a different father who is in the United States.

Questions:

- 1- What issues and concerns does this story raise?
- 2- If this happened in your local community, what could have been done to help Maria?
- 3- What can be done to try to prevent this from happening in your local community?

To read the full article see:

Deported Mexicans leave two small kids in Lodi By Stephen Magagnini, Sacramento Bee, Tuesday, Nov. 2, 2010 <http://www.sacbee.com/2010/11/02/3151148/deported-mexicans-leave-two-small.html#ixzz1bhQ6oyBL>

