



You Have The Power

You have the power to be in a healthy, respectful and supportive relationship

What is an unhealthy relationship?

An unhealthy relationship is one in which one person uses physical, emotional or sexual abuse to gain power and control over the other person. This is often referred to as Dating Violence or Domestic Violence.

Tactics of control

Dating Violence is more than hitting. It is a pattern of abusive behavior used to threaten, frighten, injure and control another person. Over time, abusive behaviors increase in frequency and severity. Physical abuse in a relationship rarely starts out as severe violence. It's subtle. Some behaviors which show the possibility that a dating partner may eventually become physically violent include:

- extreme jealousy
- constantly criticizing
- possessiveness
- blaming others for their problems
- never being able to admit wrong doing
- cruelty to animals
- holding extreme beliefs about men and women and relationships (i.e., a man is the decision-maker in the relationship and the woman is supposed to please him)

If you are being abused...

- Remember, you are not responsible for the abuse--you cannot make someone hurt you. They choose to do it.
- Find someone to talk with about the abuse.
- Think of ways you can be safe.

- Remember you are not alone. Approximately 1 out of every 3 high school and college students has experienced sexual, physical, verbal or emotional violence in dating relationships.

If a friend is being abused...

- Tell them it's not their fault.
- Tell them they do not deserve it.
- Listen to them without judging.
- Believe them, and let them know that you do.
- Don't blame them for the abuse; leaving an abusive relationship is hard and can take a long time.
- Give them good information about abuse—you can call your local crisis line and get information and support.

◆ Dating can help you . . .

Learn about yourself. Dating gives you a chance to examine who you are and who you want to be. You can also learn about trust, respect and affection.

Learn about others. Dating helps you find out what kind of person you want to spend time with. You learn about the qualities you admire in a person and those qualities that matter less.

In a healthy relationship, both partners treat each other with respect, support each other's goals in life and expect each other to be independent. People have their own opinions, feelings, friends and activities. In an equal relationship, decisions are made together. Both partners can make compromises, admit mistakes, and communicate openly and truthfully.

◆ You do have choices

Making decisions about a relationship can be a difficult struggle. Leaving an abusive relationship can be a very dangerous time so it is important to plan for your safety.

- You can call your local crisis line
- You can attend a support group
- You can tell friends, family, teachers, counselors or any other person who may help you.

◆ Identifying An Abusive Relationship

Look over the questions below. If you have experienced one or more of these things, you may be in an abusive relationship. Remember, when someone scares, hurts or continually makes fun of you, IT'S ABUSE.

Do You?

- Sometimes feel scared of how your partner will act?
- Believe that your partner will change if only you change something about yourself?
- Try not to do anything that will make your partner mad?
- Feel like no matter what you do your partner is never happy with you?
- Always do what your partner wants instead of what you want?
- Stay with your partner only because you are afraid of what your partner will do if you leave or break up?

Does Your Partner?

- Embarrass or make fun of you in front of others?
- Put down your accomplishments?
- Use intimidation/threats to get her/his way?
- Call you names or yell at you?
- Use alcohol or drugs as an excuse to say hurtful things or to abuse you?
- Ever threaten, grab, push, kick, pinch, shove, slap, torture or hit you?
- Ever threaten to kill you, a loved one, or a pet?
- Make all the decisions in the relationship?
- Possess strict ideas about male and female roles in relationships?
- Pressure or force you to have sex?
- Show extreme jealousy or possessiveness?
- Show up to make sure you are where you said you would be?
- Prevent you from doing things you want to do, such as hanging out with friends and family or having time to yourself?
- Make you feel like everything that goes wrong is your fault?

If you believe that you may be in an abusive relationship, it may be time to seriously evaluate your safety and explore your options.

◆ When you end a relationship with an abusive partner

Just because a violent relationship is over, doesn't mean the risk of violence is over. Some recommendations to stay safe:

- Talk with your friends about what you're going through so they can support you and look out for you.

- If you can, tell your parents, friends, or neighbors what's going on, especially if your partner might come to your home.
- Talk to your school counselor, boss, or trusted co-worker. Together you might alert security, adjust your schedule or come up with other ways to make you feel safe.
- Avoid isolated areas at school or work. Have someone walk you to your car.
- Create a plan with family and friends for what to do if they encounter your partner.
- Call your local domestic violence hotline for other suggestions to stay safe. The numbers for Kentucky's Domestic Violence Program's hotlines are on the inside of this brochure.

If any of these things are happening to you in your relationship, talk to someone to learn more about dating violence. It may be time to seriously evaluate the safety in your relationship.

It is a good idea to find people in your community who understand abuse and can help you make a plan for staying safe. If you are not sure about what resources are available in your community, please call the Kentucky Domestic Violence Association at 502-209-5382 during business hours or the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE.

KDVA Contact Information

Address: P O Box 356
Frankfort, KY 40602
Phone: 502-209-KDVA (5382)
Fax: 502-226-KDVA (5382)
Website: www.kdva.org

Kentucky's Domestic Violence Programs

- A. Ashland**
Safe Harbor/FIVCO, 1-800-926-2150
- B. Bowling Green**
Barren River Area Safe Space,
1-800-928-1183
- C. Elizabethtown**
SpringHaven, inc, 1-800-767-5838
- D. Hazard**
LKLP Safe House, 1-800-928-3131
- E. Hopkinsville**
Sanctuary, Inc, 1-800-766-0000
- F. Lexington**
Bluegrass Domestic Violence
Program, 1-800-544-2022
- G. Louisville**
The Center for Women and Families,
1-877-803-7577
- H. Maysville**
Women's Crisis Center,
1-800-928-6708
- I. Morehead**
DOVES of Gateway, 1-800-221-4361
- J. Mount Vernon**
Family Life Abuse Center,
1-800-755-5348
- K. Northern Kentucky**
Women's Crisis Center,
1-800-928-3335
- L. Owensboro**
OASIS,
1-800-882-2873
- M. Paducah**
Merryman House, 1-800-585-2686
- N. Prestonsburg**
Sandy Valley Abuse Center,
1-800-649-6605
- O. Somerset**
Bethany House Abuse, Shelter, Inc
1-800-755-2017



