



You Have The Right

to be free from violence

to be safe

◆ What is Domestic Violence?

Domestic violence is defined as a pattern of coercive and controlling behaviors that one person uses against another to gain power and control over that person. Partners may be married or not married; heterosexual, gay, or lesbian; living together, separated or dating. Domestic violence knows no boundaries; victims can be of any age, sex, race, culture, religion, education, employment or marital status. Types of abuse may include:

Physical Abuse is any physically aggressive behavior, indirect physically harmful behavior or threats of physical violence. This includes, but is not limited to, throwing objects, pushing, shoving, slapping, hitting, kicking, stomping, biting, punching, choking, burning, dragging, hair-pulling, and using weapons or objects to injure.

Verbal Abuse includes, but is not limited to, threatening, name-calling, belittling, ridiculing, insulting and cursing.

Emotional or Psychological Abuse includes, but is not limited to, long periods of intentional silence, derogatory or demeaning comments, making threats to harass or kill the victim or the victim's family, withdrawing love, ignoring, intimidating, hurting or threatening to hurt pets, isolating, manipulating, and other actions to imply that the victim is "crazy".

Sexual Abuse is using sex in an exploitative fashion or forcing sex on another person. This includes, but is not limited to, unwanted touching or abuse of genitals or breasts, or rape, rape with objects, offensive statements of another's sexuality or body, forced sexual relations with others, and prostitution. Sex can be pressured, coerced or forced.

Neglect includes, but is not limited to, the denial of basic human needs such as food, clothing, shelter, medical attention and personal hygiene. In some cases, it may mean complete abandonment.

Isolation includes, but is not limited to, locking the victim in the home, providing no access to a car, telephone, etc, monitoring and controlling what the victim does, who the victim sees, where the victim goes, not allowing or limiting contact with friends and family.

Economic Abuse includes, but is not limited to, preventing the victim from getting or keeping a job, making the victim ask for money, giving her/him an allowance, taking her/his money, not letting her/him know about or have access to the family income.

◆ 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.

◆ Tactics of Control

Domestic 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 that indicate that a partner may become physically violent include:

- Extreme jealousy
- Possessiveness
- Constant criticism
- Cruelty to animals
- Blaming others for their problems
- Never being able to admit wrong-doing
- Having extreme beliefs about the roles of men and women in relationships

◆ Statistics

If you, or someone you know, are being abused, you are not alone:

- Nearly one in three adult women has experienced at least one physical assault by a partner during adulthood.
- One-third of all women who are killed are killed by intimate partners or former intimate partners.
- Forty percent of women seeking treatment in hospital emergency rooms for intentional injuries have been harmed by an intimate partner.
- Battering is the major cause of injury to women, resulting in more injuries than auto accidents, rapes, and muggings combined.
- Estimates show that the number of women abused by their husbands/ live-in boyfriends is around 4 million per year.

◆ You Do Have Choices

Making decisions about relationships can be difficult. However, help is available for you and your family. There are options to consider:

- You can reach out for help from friends, family or another person you trust who may be able to help.
- You can contact your local domestic violence program crisis line 24 hours a day.
- You can attend a support group for others with similar experiences.
- You can call the police for protection. The abuser may be arrested without a warrant.
- You can get medical attention in order to get records and photos of your injuries.
- You can petition for an Emergency Protective Order in the District Court Clerk's office in your county.

It is a good idea to find people in your community who understand abuse and can help you make a plan for staying safe. Leaving an abusive relationship can be the most dangerous time, so it is very important that you plan for safety. Essentially, a safety plan is being aware of your surroundings and planning where to go and what do to during a violent incident in order to increase your safety.

◆ What You Can Do To Help

Do you know someone that is in an abusive relationship? Do you suspect that a friend, relative, or someone you know is being abused? There are some things that you can do to help.

Educate yourself on domestic violence and share what you learn with the person. Discuss the dynamics of domestic violence and how abuse is based on power and control. Explain that domestic violence is a crime, and that no one deserves to be threatened, hit or beaten.

Be aware of resources in your community that offer services to victims and, refer that person to those resources.

Offer support. Listen without judging. Tell the person that you are concerned about his/her safety and remind him/her that he/she are not alone. Acknowledge that it takes strength and courage to survive and trust someone enough to talk

about the situation. Let the person make his/her own decisions and support him/her, even if it means not being ready to leave the relationship.

Take action against domestic violence. Support local domestic violence centers with your money, time or resources. Raise public awareness in your community. Ask your legislators about pending domestic violence legislation. Hold batterers accountable in your community. Make domestic violence a workplace issue. Tell healthcare professionals to screen for domestic violence with their patients. Call the police if you see or hear an assault in progress. Make a personal commitment to educate others.

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

