

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INFORMATION



Many myths surround domestic violence. Some believe it only happens to other people. Unfortunately, it can happen to anyone. Our society—and often victims—has traditionally overlooked, denied or excused the problem.

Domestic violence occurs when someone uses a pattern of physical, sexual and/or emotionally abusive behaviors to maintain control over an intimate partner or family member. Abusers use fear, guilt, shame and intimidation techniques to keep victims under control. Abusers often escalate from verbal abuse and threats to physical violence. Physical violence, or the threat of, is the most immediate danger but the long term emotional and psychological consequences are severe.

Knowing and acknowledging the warning signs and symptoms of domestic violence is the first step.

No one should live in fear . . . Help is available!

INDICATORS OF AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP:

DOES YOUR PARTNER?

- ◇ Act excessively jealous and possessive?
- ◇ Control where you go, what you do or how you dress?
- ◇ Keep you from seeing family and friends?
- ◇ Limit your access to money, computer, or car?
- ◇ Constantly check up on you?
- ◇ Have a “scary” or unpredictable temper?
- ◇ Hurt you, or threaten to hurt or kill you?
- ◇ Threaten to take your children away or harm them?
- ◇ Threaten to commit suicide if you leave?
- ◇ Force you to have sex?
- ◇ Destroy your belongings?
- ◇ Humiliate or yell at you?
- ◇ Criticize and put you down?
- ◇ Embarrass you in front of your friends or family?
- ◇ Ignore or dismiss your opinions/accomplishments?
- ◇ Blame you for their own abusive behavior?
- ◇ See you as property or a sex object?

DO YOU?

- ◇ Feel afraid most of the time?
- ◇ Avoid certain topics because you fear the response?
- ◇ Feel you can’t do anything right for your partner?
- ◇ Believe you deserve to be hurt or mistreated?
- ◇ Wonder if you’re the one who is crazy?
- ◇ Feel emotionally numb or helpless?

WHAT TO DO?

- ◇ Call 911 immediately!
- ◇ Call Crisis Hotline at 800-799-SAFE (7233)
- ◇ Talk to a trusted friend or family member (not related to the abuser).
- ◇ Make and implement a plan for resolution!

T I P S

You are not alone
It is NOT your fault
Help is available
Domestic violence is a CRIME!

For emergencies, call 911

Sterling Police Department
Crime Prevention Unit
crimeprevention@sterling-il.gov
www.ci.sterling.il.us/main/departments/police

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