

Suggestions for helping a friend

Do you know someone in an abusive relationship? Do you suspect that a friend, relative or someone you know is being abused? Don't be afraid to offer help—you might just save someone's life. Here are some suggestions on how to assist someone who may be in an abusive relationship.

Approach your friend in an understanding non-blaming way. Tell them they are not alone, that there are people in the same kind of situation, and that it takes strength to survive and trust someone enough to talk about battering.

Acknowledge that it is scary and difficult to talk about domestic violence. Tell this person that they don't deserve to be threatened, hit, or beaten. Nothing a person can do or say makes the abuser's violence ok.

Support this person as a friend. Be a good listener. Encourage them to express hurt or anger if they need to. Allow the person to make their own decisions, even if it means not being ready to leave the abusive relationship.

Provide information on available resources, whether it be through the Family Crisis Center, family, or religious resources.

Inform your friend about legal protection that is available in the form of a Civil Protection Order. Civil Protection Orders prevent further harassment by the abuser.

Plan safe strategies for leaving an abusive relationship.

The best thing you can do for a friend is offer your support

How we can help

- Shelter
- Crisis Counseling
- Personal Support
- Advocacy in Obtaining Services
- Support Groups for women and children
- Legal & Criminal Justice Advocacy
- Information & Referrals
- Food & Clothing Assistance
- Community / School Presentations
- Referrals to Legal Aid
- Referrals to Scholarship Programs
- Safety Planning

National Domestic Violence Hotline
1.800.799.SAFE (7233)

Health & Welfare
333 Walker Dr.
Rexburg, ID 83440
359.4750

Legal Advice Hotline
1.877.500.2980

Family Crisis Center
16 E Main St.
Rexburg, ID 83440
208.356.0065
[fax] 356.0717



FAMILY CRISIS CENTER

P.O. Box 422. Rexburg, ID 83440

208.356.0065

24/HR Hotline: 1.800.962.5601

WORKING TOGETHER
FOR A BETTER TOMORROW



What everyone should know about Domestic Violence

Abusive behaviors are learned behaviors. Abuse is not a “natural” reaction to an outside event. It is not “normal” to behave in a violent manner within a personal relationship. It is learned from seeing abuse used as a successful tactic of control—often in the home in which the abuser grew up. It is reinforced when abusers are not held responsible, or the act is ignored. Domestic Violence is a pattern of behavior whose effects, without intervention, become more destructive and sometimes lethal over time.

Violence can take many forms, such as physical, emotional / psychological, sexual, and financial. It can happen once in a while, or all the time. Although each situation is different, there are common warning signs or “red flag” behaviors to look out for:

- Destructive Criticism/Verbal Attacks
- Pressure Tactics/ Guilt Trips
- Abusing Authority
- Disrespect
- Abusing Trust
- Breaking Promises
- Emotional Withholding
- Minimizing, Denying & Blaming
- Economic Control
- Self-Destructive Behavior
- Isolation From Support System
- Harassment
- Intimidation
- Threats
- Physical Violence
- Weapons (as Implied Threat)

Domestic Violence is considered partner violence, defined as **violent or controlling behavior by a person toward an intimate partner**. Although the partner is the primary target, violence is often directed toward children, and sometimes family members, friends and even bystanders in attempts to control their partner.

**Domestic violence is an issue of
POWER AND CONTROL.**

An abusive relationship may not be constantly abusive. The offender may actually show remorse for the violence, promising to change. Anyone experiencing abuse, understandably hopes for such change. The relationship most often involves good times, bad times, and in-between times. The positive behaviors that may exist don’t make the abuse any less damaging.

Cycle of Domestic Violence

Tension building: criticism, yelling, swearing, using angry gestures, coercion, threats.

Abuse: physical and sexual attacks and threats.

Honeymoon: apologizes, blaming, promise to change, gifts.

LOVE—HOPE—FEAR: These three dynamics keep the cycle in motion and make it hard to end a violent relationship.

Love for your partner and the relationship, it’s not bad all the time.

Hope that it will change, the relationship didn’t start off abusive like this.

Fear that the threats to harm you or your family will become a reality.



Once violence has begun, it not only continues but increases over time in both frequency and severity. The tension-building phases become shorter, and more intense, the battering incidents more frequent and severe, and the loving reconciliations shorter and less intense. After many years of battering, there may no longer be apologies at all.

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

Ask yourself if you want to remain in your present situation. Even if this was the first time you were abused, and you were not seriously injured, the event should not be taken lightly.

In some relationship, battering is a once in a lifetime experience. However, more often than not, once the violence has started, it develops into a pattern of escalating abuse.

You can:

- Remain with your batterer, while seeking counseling and support services for yourself and your children
- Move out temporarily, or for good.
- Insist that your abusive partner move out temporarily or for good.
- Take legal action
- Join a support group for women who have experienced abusive relationships.

If you decide to remain with an abusive partner:

Seek counseling if you do nothing else, access individual counseling for yourself & your children. (Counseling as a couple when abuse is present in a relationship is strongly discouraged.)

Develop a Safety Plan plan ahead by creating some action steps in case another incident occurs. Making preparations in advance will help you feel more in control of the situation. Think about what you would take, where you would go, and important information you might need.

If you plan to move out:

Taking your children You can legally take your children with you when you move out, unless your partner has been awarded sole legal custody.

Decide where to go You and your children can access the Family Crisis Center Shelter or another shelter in the surrounding area to ensure safety.

Know what to take Whether you believe it will be for a short time, or for good, it is important to take: birth certificates, social security cards, medications, school records, any legal papers for your automobile or household, items of personal value, etc.