

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

What is it?

Domestic violence is about

Power and Control.

It is a pattern of controlling behaviors that may include physical, sexual, or emotional abuse. It can be found in heterosexual and homosexual relationships.

Domestic violence is a crime and it is a choice made by the batterer.

Even if your partner does not physically hurt you, threats of battering may be present and are reinforced by...

Intimidation, Blame, Denials, Threats, Isolation, or Force.

You may be experiencing domestic violence if your partner is doing any of these or other unwanted behaviors:

Playing mind games, accusing you of having affairs, using your children against you, controlling how you look, threatening you, calling you names, saying you are ugly, fat, or crazy, taking your car from you, threatening to take the kids away if you tell, demanding sex, harming your pets, acting extremely jealous or possessive, threatening to commit suicide or to kill you, keeping you from taking birth control, using your religious beliefs against you, withholding medical help, controlling your money, keeping you from your family, friends or community, and using physical attacks such as kicks, pushes, hits, slaps, punching holes in the walls, destroying your belongings, hair pulling, cigarette burns, stabbing, etc.

Assessing the Danger in your Relationship

From *Mending the Sacred Hoop – Technical Assistance Project*. www.msh-ta.org

The following questions may help you examine how dangerous your situation is and how it is affecting your life. The number of “yes” answers does not necessarily indicate greater or lesser danger, but answering these questions can alert you to what you may already suspect about the danger of your situation. Remember: domestic violence can lead to death.

- ◆ Has your partner ever injured you so badly you needed medical attention?
- ◆ Does your partner seem preoccupied or obsessed with you? (following you, monitoring your whereabouts, stalking)
- ◆ Have your partner’s assaults or abuse become more violent or brutal?
- ◆ Do you believe your partner may seriously hurt or kill you?
- ◆ Has your partner threatened, killed, or hurt a family pet?
- ◆ Was your partner’s last relationship abusive?
- ◆ Has your partner ever been charged with domestic violence?
- ◆ Do you feel isolated from sources of help? (no phone, family or friends?)
- ◆ Does your partner have access to a gun?
- ◆ Has your partner ever threatened your life?
- ◆ Has your partner threatened violent retaliation if you leave?

We respect your choices, fears, and confidentiality and we want to help.

Victim advocates can help. They are trained in domestic violence issues, offer confidentiality, are available 24 hours a day, and do not charge for services offered.



**To reach an advocate
CALL:**

Florida Coalition Against
Domestic Violence

1-800-500-1119

National Domestic Violence
Hotline

1-800-799-7233

Local Center



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A DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SAFETY PLAN

*Because you have the
right to live a life free of
fear and violence!*

Florida Domestic
Violence Hotline
1-800-500-1119



www.fcadv.org

Could I have done something differently to prevent the violence?

You are NEVER to blame!

It was NOT your fault!

As a survivor of domestic violence, you are never to blame. The abuser is the only person responsible for the crime. There is never a time when the use of alcohol or drugs is an acceptable excuse for violence. Regardless of your situation, behavior, or personality, you are not to blame.

Batterers choose to commit violence...

- ◆ On whom
- ◆ When
- ◆ How
- ◆ How much
- ◆ By what means
- ◆ Where
- ◆ Who will witness

YOU ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR, NOR DESERVING OF, VIOLENCE!



Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence (FCADV)

1-800-500-1119

www.fcadv.org

Who is a Safety Plan for?

For those:

Living With an Abuser – because the danger can occur at any time

Planning to Leave – because few abusers allow their partner to leave peacefully

Living Separately – because danger often increases after a survivor leaves or ends the relationship

If you are experiencing domestic violence, what are your options?

If you stay in your relationship, you may consider the following:

- ✦ Notify someone of the abuse
- ✦ Talk with a counselor
- ✦ Get help from the domestic violence center
- ✦ Make a plan for escape
- ✦ Teach your children how to escape and get help
- ✦ **Make a safety plan**

Planning for safety is important whether the relationship continues or ends.

Should you decide to leave your relationship...

Planning may increase your safety. Leaving can be very dangerous and should be planned carefully. To speak to a counselor who can help you plan to leave call **1-800-500-1119**. There are people who can help you start a violence-free life.

You may ask an advocate about...

- ✦ Filing for a free injunction for protection
- ✦ Helping you understand the legal system
- ✦ Free confidential counseling
- ✦ Moving away
- ✦ Staying at a free emergency domestic violence shelter or other safe place

Who can I turn to for HELP?



The toll-free, confidential hotline is available 24 hours a day to respond to your needs. Hotline advocates will provide you with immediate assistance as well as local referrals. Advocates can provide you with referrals and information on counseling, advocacy, and other services you may choose to pursue.

FCADV Hotline: 1-800-500-1119

SAFETY TIPS

1. If someone is threatening you or your children, take their threat seriously.
2. Calls for assistance should be made from phones in safe locations.
3. Change your habits...choose different grocery stores, routes home...
4. Identify transportation options through friends, family, agencies, and hotline.
5. Request confidentiality when working with agencies and churches.
6. Ask an advocate to help plan for safety.
7. Have a signal for help with trusted friends and neighbors.
8. Identify someone on the job who is most likely to help you if you are in danger. Decide if it is possible to use a signal for help.
9. Make a list of people you can count on during emergencies.
10. Learn about the possibility of your abuser monitoring your computer use.

SAFETY BAG

A safety bag is used when planning to leave a dangerous relationship. It should contain important items and information. It is best to keep the bag with someone you trust. That person should keep it safely hidden and not tell your abuser of your plans to leave.

Safety bag items may include:

- √ID
- √Keys (spare set)
- √Checkbook
- √Bank statements
- √Birth Certificates for you and your children
- √Medicine, prescriptions and medical equipment
- √Pictures of the family that include the abuser
- √Proof of income: pay stubs, financial statements
- √Partner's personal information: date of birth, social security number, place of employment
- √Health care information
- √Money (if possible)
- √Address books