



## Domestic Violence Information

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Domestic Violence is a pattern of coercive tactics that can include physical, psychological, sexual, economic, and emotional abuse, perpetrated by one person against an intimate partner, with the goal of establishing and maintaining power and control.

Domestic Violence occurs in all kinds of intimate relationships, including married couples, people who are dating, couples who live together, people with children in common, same-sex partners, people who were formerly in a relationship with the person abusing them, and teen dating relationships.

Abusive behaviors are not symptoms that someone is angry or out of control. An abuser makes a choice to exert power and control over his or her partner. Abusive behaviors include physical, emotional, sexual, social, and financial abuse.

### Physical Abuse

Physical abuse often begins with less violent assaults such as pushing. As the abuse continues, however, it becomes increasingly violent. Abusers often target areas of the body that are usually covered with clothing because the injuries are less likely to be visible to others. Acts of physical abuse include:

- Pushing
- Restraining
- Shaking
- Slapping
- Biting
- Punching
- Kicking
- Throwing objects at the victim
- Target hitting
- Sustained beating
- Abuse planned to cause the victim to miscarry
- Using weapons
- Strangulation
- Homicide



## Emotional Abuse

Emotional Abuse is a tool used by those who want to make their partners feel scared, crazy, worthless, or responsible for the abuse. The abuser's goal is control over the victim. Emotional abuse may include:

- Making jokes about the victim
- Insults
- Criticizing the victim's competence
- Ignoring the victim's feelings
- Withholding affection as a form of punishment
- Blaming the victim for all problems
- Yelling at the victim
- Humiliating the victim in front of others
- Accusing the victim of being the abusive partner
- Threatening to take the children away from the victim
- Threatening physical violence
- Threatening suicide to punish the victim

## Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is one of the least discussed, but most common, forms of domestic violence. Sexual abuse includes:

- Sexual jokes that make the victim uncomfortable
- Treating women as sex objects
- Criticizing the victim's sexuality
- Using sexual jealousy as a tool of control
- Uncomfortable or unwanted touch
- Withholding sex as punishment
- Demanding sex
- Flaunting affairs



- Rape
- Sex after beatings
- Forcing the victim to witness or participate in sexual activity with others
- Sexually assaulting the victim in front of the children
- Sexual torture

### **Social Abuse**

Social abuse is used to isolate the victim from others in the community. The fewer people the victim is connected with, the more control the abuser has over the victim. Examples of social abuse include:

- Insisting that the couple spend all their time together
- Discouraging the victim from seeing friends or family
- Forbidding the victim to see friends or family
- Monitoring the victim's mail or phone calls
- Checking the odometer
- Restricting access to the car or car keys
- Telling others the victim is crazy or abusive

### **Financial Abuse**

Financial Abuse Abusers often attempt to establish financial control over victims. Victims who are financially dependent on abusers have fewer resources for escape. Financial abuse includes:

- Making all financial decisions for the household
- Keeping financial secrets
- Monitoring the victim's spending
- Controlling the victim's access to cash
- Refusing to let the victim work
- Forcing the victim to turn over income to the abuser