

WHAT IS DOMESTIC ABUSE?

Domestic abuse is the physical abuse, threat of physical abuse, or the emotional abuse by a relative or person with whom the victim resides.

- No one deserves to be beaten.
- The act of assault is a crime no matter where it occurs.
- The violent situation will not improve without action and may result in death.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT

YWCA
LEWISTON, ID-CLARKSTON, WA
300 MAIN STREET
LEWISTON, ID 83501

24 HR. HELP LINE
(208) 746-9655
800-669-3176
(WA OR ID)

VIOLENCE AT HOME HAS BECOME AN EPIDEMIC IN THIS COUNTRY

- Every year in the United States there are over 3 million incidents of domestic abuse.
- Every nine seconds someone is beaten by their domestic partner.
- Every year over 4,000 victims of domestic violence are killed.
- 95% of domestic abuse victims are women.
- Domestic abuse causes more injuries to women in the USA between the ages of 15 and 44 than car accidents, muggings and rapes combined.
- Nearly a third of the women who seek care from hospital emergency rooms are there for injuries resulting from domestic abuse.
- Up to 50% of all homeless women and children in this country are fleeing domestic abuse.
- More than 50% of child abductions result from domestic abuse.

"I HAVE A FRIEND WHO..."

HOW TO HELP A FRIEND WHO IS A VICTIM OF DOMESTIC ABUSE

MORE THAN ONE-THIRD OF AMERICANS SAY THEY KNOW SOMEONE WHO HAS BEEN A VICTIM OF DOMESTIC ABUSE

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HOW TO TALK WITH A FRIEND YOU THINK MAY BE BEING ABUSED

- **BRING UP THE SUBJECT.** Don't be afraid to let her know your concerns. Say that you can see what's happening and that you want to help. Let her know she is not alone.
- **ACKNOWLEDGE THAT SHE'S IN A VERY DIFFICULT, SCARY SITUATION.** Let her know that it's not her fault that she's being battered. Encourage her to express her feelings of hurt or anger or humiliation. Remind her that the batterer, not the victim, is responsible for the abuse. Remember that it may be difficult for her to talk about it with you.
- **DON'T BUY INTO HER DENIAL.** If she refuses to acknowledge that she's in a dangerous situation, let her know that you believe she is, and that you are concerned for her safety.
- **RESPECT HER RIGHT TO MAKE HER OWN DECISIONS.** Let her find her own way. Don't start with what you think she should do, or insist that she follow your plan.
- **GO WITH HER.** If she needs medical care, go with her. If she is going to the police, to court, or to see a lawyer, offer to go along, but let her do the talking.
- **PLAN SAFE STRATEGIES WITH HER.** If she is contemplating leaving an abusive relationship, help her to develop her "safety plan." Make sure she's comfortable with the plan. Never encourage her to follow a plan that she doesn't consider "safe."
- **GIVE HER TIME.** If she doesn't respond to you, ask again a few days later. Don't rush into providing solutions.
- **LISTEN --** without judging.
- **CONTINUE TO BE HER FRIEND.** If she remains in the relationship, continue to be her friend while firmly expressing your concern for her safety. Remember that, for many women, leaving an abusive relationship can take time and may not happen right away.
- **LET HER KNOW THAT YOU CARE ABOUT HER AND THAT IT'S NOT HER FAULT.** Explain that there's never an excuse for physical violence in a relationship.

5 THINGS THAT ARE VERY HELPFUL TO SAY

1. I'm afraid for your safety.
2. I'm afraid for the safety of your children.
3. It will only get worse.
4. I'm here for you when you are ready or when you are able to leave.
5. You deserve better than this.

HELP IS AVAILABLE

- Encourage her to call the 24 hour help line of the

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(IDAHO AND WASHINGTON ONLY)

- If she is planning to leave, remind her to take important papers, such as birth certificates, passports, health insurance documents, food stamps, photo ID, driver's license, checkbooks, Social Security cards, immunization records, etc., for both herself and her children.
- Encourage her to tell her doctor or nurse about the abuse, and ask him or her to document it in the medical records.
- Remind her that domestic abuse is a serious crime and that she can seek protection from the police and courts.
- If she has a protection order against her batterer, let her know that it is against the law for him to contact her in any way. Encourage her to document and report to law enforcement any violations of the protection order.