

## **Domestic Violence Is a Widespread Problem**

Only 13 percent of all domestic violence cases in the U.S. are reported. An overwhelming number of people live with abuse without ever saying a word.

Domestic violence, or simply abuse, is any type of behavior to gain power and control over a partner in a relationship.

## **Four Types of Abuse**

**Physical:** Slapping, punching, pushing, kicking, beating.

**Verbal:** Name-calling, telling you you're not smart or pretty, insults.

**Emotional:** Blaming you for things that have gone wrong. Telling you how you should dress. Embarrassing you in front of others. Keeping you away from your family and friends.

**Economic:** Controlling all money-related decisions. Making you feel dependent on him for your survival.

**It does not matter  
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## **Domestic Violence Affects All Women**

In over 95 percent of all reported domestic violence cases, a man abuses a woman.

It does not matter how much money you make, or what your race is – abuse can happen to anyone.

Abuse is wrong and it's against the law. A woman must know how to leave her abuser safely.

## **Your Health Is Important**

Take care of your health. Do it for yourself and for your family.

For more information about abuse call the National 24-Hotline at:  
**1-800-799-7233**

Or visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Web site at:  
**[www.cdc.gov/ncipc](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc)**

# **Domestic Violence**

*how to break the cycle*



## Four Facts About Abuse

**MYTH:** Domestic violence doesn't happen very often.

**FACT:** Very few domestic violence incidents are ever reported. Millions of women and children are abused without anyone ever knowing.

**MYTH:** Domestic violence only happens to poor people.

**FACT:** Anyone is at risk of abuse. It does not matter how much money you make, what your racial background is, or how much education you have.

**MYTH:** Abuse only happens when drugs or alcohol are involved.

**FACT:** Many incidents of abuse happen without any alcohol or drugs – they are an excuse, not a cause.

**MYTH:** Women who stay in abusive relationships enjoy it.

**FACT:** Women who try to leave their abusers risk being murdered. They stay because they fear for their own lives and the lives of their children.

**Women's shelters, healthcare providers, and police departments can help women design safety plans. Safety plans may be different for each woman.**



## The Three Stages of the Domestic Violence Cycle

### 1. Tension-Building Stage

A survivor feels more embarrassment than anger. She tells herself, "It's my fault."

### 2. Acute Battering Stage

Abuse goes from controlled to uncontrolled. The survivor fears for her life and the safety of her children.

### 3. Honeymoon Stage

The abuser tries to win the survivor back with kindness and apologies. He says "This will never happen again."

An abuser may really want to stop hurting their partner. But unless each side gets help separately, the cycle almost always starts again.



## Why Leaving Is Difficult

A woman might believe her partner's emotional and verbal abuse. She has been told she could not handle the realities of rent, daycare, food, and other money matters.

She is also afraid that trying to leave will lead to more violent attacks. 75 percent of all abuse-related murders occur when the woman is trying to leave her partner.

## Seven Tips for Leaving Safely

- Think about all ways to get out (doors, windows, stairs, etc.)
- Have a safe place to go (friend's house, hotel, shelter, etc.)
- Pack a survival kit (keys, clothes, birth certificates, credit cards, etc.)
- Open a bank account before you leave, have statements sent to someone you trust
- Avoid arguments with abuser in areas without a way out (doors, windows)
- Learn the number of a domestic violence hotline
- If you are in danger and need emergency help, call 9-1-1

## Shelters Meet Your Needs

A battered women's agency will put you and your children in a shelter that the abuser cannot find. Counselors will help you avoid more abuse.

Some agencies offer help finding a home, or furniture and clothing for you and your children. They may also have job training programs, and will help you find a job.

**Love shouldn't hurt,  
break the cycle!**

