



# Domestic Abuse

**PREVENTION &  
RESOURCE HANDBOOK**



*Nearly one-third of American women report being physically or sexually abused by a husband or boyfriend at some point in their lives (Commonwealth Fund Survey 1998).*

## what is domestic abuse?

It is a pattern of coercive behavior used to establish power and control over another person through fear and intimidation, often including the threat or use of violence. The most common acts of domestic violence generally fall into one or more of the following categories:

**Physical battering** – The abuser’s physical attacks or aggressive behavior can range from bruising to murder. It often begins with what is excused as trivial contacts that escalate into more frequent and serious attacks.

**Sexual abuse** – Physical attack by the abuser is often accompanied by, or culminates in, sexual violence wherein the victim is forced to have sexual intercourse with the abuser or take part in unwanted sexual activity.

**Psychological battering** – The abuser’s psychological or mental violence can include constant verbal abuse, harassment, excessive possessiveness, isolating the woman from friends and family, deprivation of physical and economic resources, and destruction of personal property.

*“In 92% of all domestic violence incidents, crimes are committed by men against women.” – Bureau of Justice Statistics*

Domestic abuse affects people who are married, divorced, living together, dating, and people from all social, economic, racial, religious, ethnic, and sex groups. Anyone can be a victim of domestic violence, but women are by far the most common victims. In any culture, the abuser is most commonly the man. Many theories have been developed to explain why men use violence against their partners including family dysfunction, inadequate communication skills, substance abuse, stress, lack of spirituality and economic hardship. Batterers often continue their behaviors because violence is an effective method for gaining and keeping control over another person and because they usually do not suffer adverse consequences as a result of their behaviors.

# signs of domestic violence

The following signs may indicate or lead to domestic abuse:

- Does your partner hit, punch, slap, or kick you? Does he make you have sex that makes you uncomfortable?
- Does your partner prevent you from going where you want and when you want to?
- Does your partner abuse alcohol or other drugs? There is a strong link between violence and problems with drugs and alcohol, but these substances are by no means excuses to abusive behaviors.
- Do you fear your partner when he gets angry? Does he always expect you to follow his orders?
- Does he threaten to hurt you or your children?

Millions of women deal with domestic violence everyday. There is no excuse for abuse, not what you say or what you do causes your spouse or partner to act violently toward you. Domestic violence does not stop. It usually gets worse. Domestic violence is a crime and it is never your fault. If you are a victim of domestic violence, protect yourself and your family and get help.



## if you are a victim of domestic violence, here is what you can do to protect yourself:

- Call 911 if you are in danger or need help.
- Talk to a friend or relative you trust for moral support.
- Contact your local domestic violence assistance program. Domestic violence programs can assist you in finding out about laws, shelters, counseling and financial assistance.
- If your friends or relatives are aware of your situation, set up signal code words either by phone or alternative methods that informs them that the situation at home is violent.
- If you have children, notify the school of any possible threats and/or the current custody situation. Make sure the school knows who can and cannot pick up the children and/or receive information about them or you.
- If you plan on leaving the home, make sure you have a plan. Keep an emergency bag with someone you trust that contains a change of clothes for yourself and for your children, an extra set of keys, copies of important documents and emergency cash. Take important papers and documents of yourself and of your children with you. Important papers may include: identification cards, social security cards, birth certificates, marriage license, checkbooks, property titles, credit cards, bank statements, pay check stubs (yours and your spouse's). Also, take with you documentation of past abuse (i.e. photos, police reports, medical records, etc.).

## once you've left the relationship:

- Obtain a restraining order. Applications for restraining orders are available at courthouses, women's shelters, legal services offices, and some police stations.
- Change your phone number.
- Screen your calls. Obtain an answering machine or a caller identification device. This can help you screen your calls more efficiently.
- Change the locks if the batterer has a key.

- Plan a way out in case the abuser confronts you.
- Vary your routine.
- You may notify your employer of your situation. This can help you discuss options available to you (i.e. scheduling, safety precautions, and employee/family assistance benefits).
- If you and the batterer have children, you may file for child support. The law requires that the parent of your children support them, even if you are living apart, even if you were never married and without regard to immigration status. Some married women may also be eligible for spousal support or alimony.

## what you can do if your spouse threatens to take your children away:

- Immediately obtain a custody order. The order can include an order to prohibit your spouse from taking the children from the county or country in which you live in.
- Give a copy of the custody order to the children's schools and let them know not to release the children to anyone but you or someone you designate.
- Make sure you keep recent photos, passports, and birth certificates of the children. Keep a list of addresses and phone numbers of your spouse's friends and relatives whether they are local or in his country of origin.

***Being a victim of domestic violence can be a devastating experience, but fortunately you don't have to go through it alone. Take the first step and contact your local domestic violence assistance program. You and your children have the right to live free from violence.***

## what you can do to help someone you know is being abused: *help someone else*

You can help make a great difference in the life of someone who is being abused. The way you react to the situation is very important. The most important way to show someone you care is to be supportive and encouraging. If you suspect someone is being abused or you have some sense that something is wrong in your friend or relative's relationship, here are some of the signs that can help you identify if the abuse exists.

The person:

- is afraid of their partner
- is always anxious to please him or her
- has stopped seeing family and/or friends
- cuts phone conversations short when their partner is in the room
- is controlled by and/or has all decisions made by partner (i.e. controls all the money, controls his/her outings etc.)
- often talks about his/her partner's jealousy, bad temper or possessiveness
- has physical injuries (bruises, broken bones, sprains, cuts, etc.)



## what you can do: *what you can do*

Sometimes it can be hard to understand why someone would stay in an abusive relationship. However, it is important to be supportive and encouraging in order to help them. This is also a great way to show them you care. *Here are some tips:*

- Approach your friend or relative in a sensitive way, letting them know your concerns. Tell them that you are worried about them and explain why.
- Listen to the person without passing judgment.
- Take the abuse seriously. Abuse can be damaging both psychologically and emotionally. Do not underestimate the danger this person might be in.
- Help them develop a plan to protect themselves. Encourage the person to contact a shelter or their local domestic violence program.
- Help them come up with alternative ways to stay safe if she decides to stay. Help her think of a place to go if an argument occurs. Make sure the person avoids rooms with no exit, or rooms with weapons (i.e. kitchen, garage).
- Help the person come up with a code word they can use on the phone to ask you for help when they are in a dangerous situation.
- Respect their right to make their own decisions, even if you don't agree with them.
- Keep supporting them once they have ended the relationship.

***For more information on how to help a friend or a relative in an abusive relationship, contact your local domestic violence program.***

*Domestic Violence between spouses not only causes injury and damage upon the abused spouse, but also upon the children in the home. Research shows that 80 to 90 percent of children living in homes where there is domestic violence are aware of the violence. Domestic violence creates a home environment where children live in constant fear and suffer both physically and emotionally.*

## potential effects on children: *effects on children*

### **Increased risk of child abuse**

- In homes where there is spousal violence, the likelihood of child abuse is 15 times higher.
- Seventy-five percent of men who abuse their spouses go on to abuse the children as well.
- Women are eight times more likely to hurt their children when they are being abused than when they are safe.

### **Increased risk of violent and abusive behaviors**

- Adolescent males who see abuse in the home are ten times more likely to abuse their future spouse than those raised in a non-violent home.
- Girls who see abuse in the home are more likely to become involved in abusive relationships than those who don't are.
- Seventy-five percent of violent children come from homes with domestic violence.

## Emotional Trauma

- Children may feel:
- Guilty about the abuse and for not stopping it;
- Abuse is their fault;
- Excessive grief for family problems/loss and for personal loss;
- Confused about conflicting feelings toward the parents: love, hate, fear;
- Fear of abandonment, the unknown, and personal injury;
- Anger about the violence and the chaos in their lives,
- Depressed;
- Helpless;
- Powerless;
- Embarrassed about events and dynamics at home.

## Behavioral Problems (often seen in opposite extremes)

- Act out/withdraw
- Overachieve/underachieve
- Needy/overly independent
- Low self-esteem/overbearing
- Passive/aggressive
- Refuse to go to school

## Other behavioral problems:

- Become caretakers for younger siblings and for parent(s)
- Act aloof, sarcastic, defensive
- Wet bed
- Frequent nightmares
- Trouble setting own limits and/or following directions
- May scream excessively when infants



## Social Difficulties

- Isolated from friends and relatives
- Relationships are frequently stormy, start intensely and end abruptly
- Difficulty in trusting, especially adults
- Poor conflict resolution and anger management skills
- Excessive social involvement (to avoid home life)
- May be overly passive with peers, or bully peers
- Engage in exploitive relationships either as perpetrator or victim
- Play with peers gets exceedingly rough

## Physical Problems

- Somatic complaints (headaches, stomachaches)
- Stuttering
- Nervous, anxious and a short attention span
- Tired, lethargic
- Frequently ill
- Poor personal hygiene
- Regress to previous developmental stages such as: bedwetting, thumb sucking
- Desensitization to pain
- High-risk play and activities
- Self abuse

***Your children depend on you for safety and security. If you are a victim of domestic violence and have children at home, please know that help is available. The following section provides a list of organizations that can help you to create a better life for your children.***



*The following are 24-hour hotlines to shelters that provide emergency and transitional shelter, crisis intervention, legal advocacy, support groups and community education.*

\*These are languages available at the shelter.

### **Human Options**

Hotline: (949) 854-3554

\* English, Vietnamese, Spanish

### **Laura's House**

Hotline: (949) 498-1511

\* English, Spanish

### **Interval House**

Hotline: (714) 891-8121

\* English, Vietnamese, Korean, Spanish

### **Women's Transitional Living Center**

Hotline: (714) 992-1931

\* English, Vietnamese, Korean, Spanish

### **Center for the Pacific Asian Family (CPAF)**

Hotline: (323) 653-4042 or (800) 339-3940

\* All Pacific Asian languages available

### **Chicana Service Action Center**

Hotline: (800) 548-2722

\* English, Spanish speaking

### **Korean American Family Service Center**

Hotline: (888) 979-3800

\* English, Korean



*If a batterer is threatening you and your family lives, you may file a temporary restraining order against that person. For temporary restraining order assistance and counseling, call (714) 935-7956. For 24-hour temporary restraining order information line, call (714) 973-0134.*

*The following are centers and agencies that provide free or low cost legal assistance or referrals to private attorneys.*

**Legal Aid Society of Orange County**

902 N. Main Street

Santa Ana, CA 92701

Phone: (714) 571-5200

\* All languages available

**Lawyer Referral Service**

1170 Civic Center Drive

Santa Ana, CA 92703

Phone: (800) 834-5001 ext. 204

\* English, Spanish

**Women's Law Center**

950 West 17th Street, Suite D & E

Santa Ana, CA 92706-3573

Phone: (714) 667-1038

**United Fathers of America**

595 S. City Drive, Suite 202

Orange, CA 92868

Phone: (714) 385-1002

**Father's Rights Organization**

Phone: (714) 542-3100

**For people with disabilities,  
Protection and Advocacy, Inc.**

3580 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 902

Los Angeles, CA 90010-2512

Phone: (800) 776-5746

\* English, Vietnamese, Korean, Spanish, Chinese





*The following are 24-hour hotlines for additional information, services and referrals in Orange County.*

**Domestic Violence Hotline**

Hotline: (800) 978-3600

\* All languages available

**Info Link**

Hotline: (800) 600-4357

\* Various languages available



*The following are 24-hour hotlines for additional information, services and referrals nation wide.*

**National Domestic Violence Hotline**

Hotline: (800) 799-SAFE

Hotline: (800) 799-7233

\* All languages available

**National Domestic Violence Hotline TDD**

Hotline: (800) 787-3224

\* For the hearing-impaired



*The following are community clinics and health centers that provide individuals and families free or low-cost medical attention on a sliding fee.*

**Lestonnac Free Clinic**

1215 E. Chapman  
Orange, CA 92866  
Phone: (714) 633-4600  
\* English, Spanish

**Huntington Beach Community Clinic**

8041 Newman Ave.  
Huntington Beach, CA 92647  
Phone: (714) 847-4222  
\* English, Spanish

**Nhan Hoa Comprehensive Health Care Clinic**

14221 Euclid Ave., Suite H  
Garden Grove, CA 92643  
Phone: (714) 539-9999  
\* English, Vietnamese

**Share Our Selves Free Clinic (SOS)**

1550 Superior Ave., Suite E-G  
Costa Mesa, CA 92627  
Phone: (949) 650-0640  
\* English, Spanish

**Vietnamese Community of OC Asian Health Center**

5015 K-L W. Edinger Avenue  
Santa Ana, CA 92704  
Phone: (714) 418-2040  
\* English, Vietnamese



*The National Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery provides free reconstructive surgery for victims of domestic violence. For counseling and referral, please contact (800) 842-4546.*

*The following are centers that provide counseling and referrals for victims and children of domestic violence.*

**Center for Pacific Asian Family**

543 N. Fairfax Ave., Suite 108

Los Angeles, CA 90036

Phone: (323) 653-4042

\* Various Pacific Asian languages available

**Human Options Community Resource Center**

1500 Adams Ave., Suite 206

Costa Mesa, CA 92626

Phone: (714) 435-9992

\* English, Spanish

**K.C. Services**

8265 Garden Grove Blvd.

Garden Grove, CA 92844

Phone: (714) 539-4544

\* English, Vietnamese, Korean, Spanish

**Korean American Family Service Center**

3727 W. Sixth St., Suite 509

Los Angeles, CA 90020

Phone: (213) 389-6755

\* English, Korean

**Women Helping Women**

661 Hamilton Avenue

Costa Mesa, CA 92627

Phone: (949) 631-2333

**CSP Inc.**

Domestic Violence Assistance Program

Lamoreaux Justice Center

341 The City Drive

Orange, CA

Phone: (714) 935-7956



**COUNSELING  
& REFERRAL**

*The following are community service organizations providing emergency assistance such as food, clothing, counseling, referral, etc.*

**Catholic Charities/Community Services**

3631 W. Warner Ave.

Santa Ana, CA 92704

Phone: (714) 668-1130

\* English, Vietnamese, Spanish

**CDC Orange County/Food Bank**

12640 Knott Street

Garden Grove, CA 92841

Phone: (714) 897-6670 ext. 0

\* English, Vietnamese, Spanish

**O.C. Korean Social Services**

13121 Brookhurst St., Suite I

Garden Grove, CA 92844

Phone: (714) 539-7966

\* English, Korean

**Share Our Selves (SOS)**

1550 Superior Ave.

Costa Mesa, CA 92627

Phone: (949) 642-3451

**Vietnamese Community of Orange County**

1618 W. First Street

Santa Ana, CA 92703

Phone: (714) 558-6009

\* English, Vietnamese

**ST. Anselm's Cross-Cultural Community Center**

13091 Galway Street

Garden Grove, CA

Phone: (714) 537-0608



**EMERGENCY  
ASSISTANCE**

## notes





This handbook was created by the Orange County District Attorney's Office, Government and Community Relations Unit in collaboration with the Family Protection Unit, and with the support of the Vietnamese & Hispanic Advisory Commissions.

The purpose of this handbook is to inform the community about domestic abuse and bring valuable information and resources to you.

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