

What is Domestic Violence?

Domestic violence is establishing and maintaining power and control over one's current or former intimate partner.

NNEDV defines it as, "a pattern of coercive and assaultive behaviors that one former or current intimate partner uses against the other."

Statistics

- 24 people per minute are victims of physical violence, rape or stalking in the U.S. (CDC)
- 1 in 4 women will experience domestic violence in her lifetime(CDC)
- 1 in 7 men have experienced severe physical violence by an intimate partner (CDC)
- A victim's risk of getting killed greatly increases when they are in the process of leaving or have just left and/or when a court order- including protection orders, divorce papers, custody orders are served (NNEDV)
- Women are 90-95 percent more likely to suffer domestic violence than are men (NNEDV)
- 3 women per day are killed in America because of Domestic Violence (Bureau of Justice Statistics 2001)
- On one day, September 12, 2012, 541 victims received services from Nebraska's 21 DV/SA Programs and these same 21 DV/SA Programs received 311 crisis calls (NNEDV)

Why is someone abusive?

The key here is that being abusive is a choice by that individual. More often than not the abuser is male, but it not 100% of the time. The abuser makes a conscious choice to abuse his/her intimate partner. Nothing "makes" an abusive person be abusive. It is not caused by lack of money, alcohol, drugs, unemployment, stress, mental illness, growing up in an abusive home, or anything else. When a person chooses to abuse his/her intimate partner, it is a choice.

What does domestic violence look like?

It is important to know there is not "one way" an individual is abusive. When one abusive tactic no longer provides the abuser the results he/she wants, they will change to another or new tactic to get the desired results. There is not a "set description" for who is an abuser nor is there one for an all inclusive list of what domestic violence looks like. Following you will find some descriptors of what domestic violence can look like.

Physical Violence/Abuse:

- Hitting, kicking, slapping, shoving
- Strangulation, smothering, burning
- Destroying property, throwing and/or breaking things
- Hurting/killing pets
- Denying medical care, medicine

Sexual Violence/Abuse:

- Rape, attempting to rape (it is not ok for a person to rape his/her partner)
- Making their partner scared to refuse sex
- Forcing their partner to have sex with other people
- Denying or sabotaging contraception

- Forcing their partner to do any sexual act that they do not want to do
- Using violence in any way during sex
- Using/inserting objects in any way the partner does not want

Emotional Abuse:

- Shifting blame onto the partner for the abuse
- Calling the partner names, using putdowns, degrading
- Excessive jealousy
- Creating “crazy-making” environments/situations
- Threatening, intimidating
- Isolating, minimizing

Financial Abuse:

- Control of the money
- Opening accounts in partner’s name without permission
- Taking the money, not allowing access to money
- Forcing the partner to work

(adapted from NNEDV)

Barriers for a victim/survivor towards living without violence:

- Lack of money, unaware of options/resources, lack of employment
- Unaware that relationships shouldn’t be abusive
- Communities, lack of personal/peer support
- Do they want to leave, stay, relocate

Risk/Lethality:

- 3 women are killed each day in America by a current/former partner (USDOJ Statistics. Homicide Trends from 1976-1999, 2001)
- Women who leave their abusive partners are at a 75% greater risk of being killed than those who stay (Nat’l Coalition Against Domestic Violence)
- Some of the most dangerous times for victims/survivors:
 - Trying to leave/has recently left
 - Court order will be/has been served on abuser i.e.; protection order, divorce/custody

What can you do:

- Hold the abuser accountable. Domestic violence is not, nor will it ever be, caused by the victim. Rather than asking “why doesn’t the victim leave?” Start asking, “why doesn’t the abuser stop?”
- Stop looking the other way when you notice someone may be a victim or an abuser, do something. Ask if the victim needs a safe number to call, that there are people who can help. Call the police if someone is being abusive.
- Know where survivors/victims can turn for help
- Take a stand against comments/jokes that degrade women. Change the culture of women being seen as property. Don’t accept the “entitlement” mentality.

- Promote healthy relationships