

Facts about Domestic Violence

- Nearly one-third of American women (31%) report being physically or sexually abused by a husband or boyfriend at some point in their lives (Commonwealth Fund Survey, 1999).
- 1,007,000 women and 371,000 men are stalked annually in the United States (National Center for Victims of Crime, *Crime and Victimization in America: 2005 Statistical Review*. Dec. 2004).
- Three in four women (76%) who reported they had been raped and/or physically assaulted since age 18 said that a current or former husband, cohabiting partner, or date committed the assault (US Department of Justice, *Prevalence, Incidence, and Consequence of Violence Against Women*. Nov. 1998).
- The health-related costs of rape, physical assault, stalking and homicide committed by intimate partners exceeds \$5.8 billion each year. \$4.1 billion are for direct medical and mental health care services, and nearly \$1.8 billion are for the indirect costs of lost productivity and wages (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, *Costs of Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in the U.S.* 2003).
- On average, more than three women are murdered by their husbands or boyfriends in this country every day. In 2000, 1,247 women were killed by an intimate partner. The same year 440 men were killed by an intimate partner (Bureau of Justice Crime Data Brief, *Intimate Partner Violence: 1993-2001*. Feb. 2003).
- In a 2002 report by the U.S. Conference of Mayors 44% of the cities surveyed identified domestic violence as the primary cause of homelessness (U.S. Conference of Mayors. *A Status Report on Hunger and Homelessness in America's Cities*. 1999).

ATVP

Celebrating 25 Years
of Survivors' Strength in 2005

PO BOX 37
1125 NW NYE, SUITE A
PULLMAN, WA 99163
TEL: (509)332-0552
FAX: (509)332-3314



A UNITED WAY AGENCY

PO BOX 8517
627 N. VAN BUREN
MOSCOW, ID 83843
TEL: (208) 882-2490
FAX: (208) 883-1041

Web Address
www.atvp.org

E-Mail Address
home@atvp.org

24-Hour Hotline
Collect Crisis Calls Accepted

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Supporting a Victim or Survivor of Domestic Violence



Alternatives to Violence of the Palouse

Help for victims and
survivors of domestic
violence and
sexual assault

24 hour Crisis Hotline
(208) 883-HELP
or
(509) 332-HELP

What is Domestic Violence?

Domestic violence is a pattern of behavior used to establish power and control over another person through fear and intimidation. Abuse happens when one person believes that they are entitled to control another. Domestic violence includes the threat or use of violence, including physical, emotional, psychological, and/or sexual abuse. Domestic violence can happen to anyone. An individual's age, gender, race, political beliefs, national origin, socioeconomic status, marital status, or sexual orientation have no bearing on whether or not domestic violence will enter their life.

Warning Signs that someone you know is being abused:

- Have you seen evidence of injuries?
- Do they miss work frequently?
- Have they stopped taking part in activities they once enjoyed?
- Do they wear concealing clothes, even in warm weather?
- Do they have a hard time making decisions and always want to check with their partner first?
- Does the partner show an unusual amount of control over their life?
- Have you noticed changes in their or their children's behavior?
- Does their partner ridicule them in public?
- Does their partner blame them for the way s/he acts or the things s/he says?

ATVP can help you and the person you care about. Please call for more information. All services are free and confidential.

How will I know if someone is being abused?

The only way to know for sure if someone is being abused is to **ASK**.

A common myth about someone experiencing abuse is that they do not want to talk about their abuse. While many try to hide the battering, they do so because they fear being blamed, not being believed, or being pressured to do something they are not ready or able to do.

Directly asking the person you care about *in private*, without judgment, and even without expectation that they will trust you enough to disclose any information relieves them of the burden of coming forward on their own. Directly asking the person also lets them know that you care and are willing to help.

What can I do to help?

- Become informed: educate yourself on the myths and facts about domestic violence. Gather information about local support programs, like ATVP. These programs can provide support for both you and the victim.
- Take the time to listen and BELIEVE what you hear. Letting them know you care and are willing to listen may be the best help you can offer.
- Let them know that you will be there for them when and if they need you (but STAY SAFE).
- Recognize that there is no “quick fix” to domestic violence.
- Make sure they know that they are not alone. It is common to have conflicting reactions to abuse such as love and fear, guilt and anger, hope and sadness. Let them know these feelings are normal.
- Tell them that the abuse is **NOT** their fault. No one deserves to be abused, nor did they cause the violence.

- Encourage them to make their own decisions – it is empowering to know that someone trusts your judgment. Trust them to make the right choices for their own lives. Tell them you respect their courage and determination.
- Express concern for their safety and the safety of their children; help in developing a safety plan. Help them think through the steps to take if their partner becomes abusive again. Make a list of people they can call and places they can go in an emergency.
- If they are planning to leave, suggest they put together and hide a suitcase of clothing, personal items, medications, money, identification and social security papers, health insurance records, checkbooks, bank records and other important documents for their self and their children.

What NOT to do:

- DO NOT judge or criticize the person's decisions. There are risks associated with every decision a domestic violence victim makes. If you truly want to be helpful, be patient and respect their decisions, *even if you do not agree with them*.
- DO NOT assume you know what is best for the person you care about.
- DO NOT expect change overnight; be patient and continue to offer support.
- DO NOT underestimate the danger the person is in or that you may be in by helping. Domestic violence can result in serious physical injury or even death. The most dangerous time for a victim of domestic violence and those close to them is when he/she is leaving the relationship.
- DO NOT tell anyone else what they have told you. The abuser may escalate the use of violence if they find out that the victim is talking about the abuse. Do not confront the abuser unless the person you care about gives you permission.