

# FAQ on Domestic Violence

## What is domestic violence?

Domestic violence is a pattern of assaultive and coercive behaviors that adults or adolescents use against their current or former intimate partners. Domestic violence occurs in intimate relationships where the perpetrator and the victim are currently or previously have been dating, living together, married or divorced. They might have children in common or not.

- *A Framework for Understanding the Nature and Dynamics of Domestic Violence*, (<http://www.mocadv.org/Resources/PDFs/dv101.pdf>), Missouri Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Intimate partner violence—or IPV—is actual or threatened physical or sexual violence or psychological and emotional abuse directed toward a spouse, ex-spouse, current or former boyfriend or girlfriend, or current or former dating partner. Intimate partners may be heterosexual or of the same sex. Some of the common terms used to describe intimate partner violence are domestic abuse, spouse abuse, domestic violence, courtship violence, battering, marital rape, and date rape (Saltzman, et al. 1999).

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([www.cdc.gov/ncipc/factsheets/ipvfacts.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/factsheets/ipvfacts.htm))

## Who are the victims?

Approximately 85 percent of the victims of domestic violence are women (U.S. Department of Justice, August 1995). However, this statistic only refers to the victim's gender and does not refer to the gender of her partner. Therefore, the 85 percent includes women in straight and lesbian relationships, and the 15 percent remainder includes men in gay as well as straight relationships.

- *Domestic Violence: The Facts* (handbook created by Peace at Home, <http://www.peaceathome.org/>)

Since statistics show that women are affected more by domestic violence than men, victims are frequently referred to as female or as battered women.

## Who are the abusers?

Abusers come from all walks of life. They may be of any sex, class background, race, religion, or sexual orientation. They come from different educational and income levels. Although batterers may be of any sex, most batterers or perpetrators are male. Another aspect of this question deals with the attitudes and behaviors of men who batter. The following presents some of the characteristics associated with batterers:

## INTIMIDATION AND VIOLENCE

- Resolves conflict with intimidation, bullying, and violence.
- Holds her down, restrains her from leaving a room, pushes, or shoves.
- Uses threats and intimidation as instruments of control or abuse. This includes threats to harm physically, to defame, to embarrass, to restrict freedom, to disclose secrets, to cut off support, to abandon, to kidnap children, and to commit suicide.

## VERBALLY ABUSIVE

- Says things that are meant to be cruel and hurtful.
- Degrades her, curses her, or minimizes her accomplishments.
- May wake her up to yell at her or not let her go to sleep by yelling at her.

## MINIMIZES ABUSE

- Redefines a violent incident, for example, by saying, “It wasn’t that bad,” or, “I didn’t hit her that hard; she bruises easily.”
- Accuses her of exaggerating or of being crazy.

## SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- Cites alcohol or drug use as an excuse or explanation for hostile or violent conduct (“That was the booze talking, not me; I got so drunk I was crazy.”).
- Forces her to use drugs or alcohol.

## BREAKS OR STRIKES THINGS IN ANGER

- Beats on tables with a fist, throws objects around or near her.
- Uses symbolic violence (tearing a wedding photo or marring a face in a photo).

## HISTORY OF VIOLENCE

- Has battered in prior relationships.
- Has previous law enforcement encounters for behavioral offenses (threats, stalking, assault, battery).

## PROJECTS BLAME

- Refuses to take responsibility for his actions.
- Blames his partner for his problems to justify the violence.
- Often blames other ethnic groups, co-workers, or women in general for his problems.
- Says things like, “You make me so mad.”

## CRUELTY TO ANIMALS OR CHILDREN

- Treats animals cruelly or is insensitive to their suffering.
- Expects children to be capable of doing things far beyond their ability or teases children until they cry.
- Forces the children to watch the abuse of the victim or engages them in the abuse of the victim.

## EXTREME JEALOUSY

- Becomes jealous of anyone or anything that takes her time away from the relationship.
- Says things like, “If I can’t have you, nobody will.”
- Requires her to account for all of her time.
- Accuses her of flirting or of having affairs.
- Calls her frequently at work or refuses to let her go to work.

## CONTROLLING BEHAVIOR

- Makes all the decisions about the house, her clothing or where they go.
- Is extremely impatient and might exhibit poor impulse control. Believes his needs and wants should be fulfilled immediately.
- Uses money to control her activities, purchases and behavior.

## ISOLATION

- Cuts her off from resources.

- Accuses people who are her supports of causing trouble.
- May not let her use the car, work or go to school.
- Says things like, “Your family just doesn’t like me or doesn’t think I’m good enough.”

#### DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE

- Has sudden and extreme changes in mood.
- Is alternately loving and abusive.
- Can behave explosively.

#### RAPE OR USE OF FORCE IN SEX

- Has no concern about whether she wants to have sex.
- Uses sulking, anger, harassment, or coercion to manipulate her into compliance.
- Forces her to have sex while she is sleeping or demands sex when she is ill or injured after a beating.

- *A Framework for Understanding the Nature and Dynamics of Domestic Violence*,  
(<http://www.mocadv.org/Resources/PDFs/dv101.pdf>), Missouri Coalition Against Domestic Violence

### **How many people are affected by domestic violence?**

According to the El Dorado Women’s Center ([www.edwomenscenter.org/FAQ](http://www.edwomenscenter.org/FAQ)) in Placerville, California, “A woman is assaulted by her partner every nine seconds in the U.S.\* There are four million victims a year. 30% of all female murder victims are slain by their male partners. One in three Americans say they have witnessed domestic violence.#”

- \*Family Violence Prevention Fund ([endabuse.org](http://endabuse.org))

- #U.S. Department of Justice

- In 2002, 24,905 domestic violence cases were reported in 2002.
- 14 deaths statewide resulted from 13 domestic violence incidents.
- 4,104 female victims were injured during their assaults.
- 75 percent of victims reporting incidents to police were female.
- 3,381 children were at the scene of the abuse when law enforcement arrived.

- 50 percent to 70 percent of men who abuse their female partners abuse their children.
- Nearly 71 percent of children who witnessed the abuse were 12 or younger.
- One of every 10 cases of women suffering abuse by their male partner is reported.
- 25 percent of pregnant women seeking prenatal care have been battered during their pregnancy.
- Battering is the major cause of injury to women ages 14-45, causing more injuries than auto crashes, muggings and rapes combined.

- New Mexico Coalition Against Domestic Violence (<http://www.nmcadv.org>),  
Albuquerque, NM

### **Is battering a momentary loss of temper?**

No. One in five women victimized by their spouses or ex-spouses report they have been victimized over and over again by the same person. (U.S. Surgeon General Antonia Novello, 1993).

- *Domestic Violence: The Facts* (information handbook created by Peace at Home, <http://www.peaceathome.org/>)

If it were, violence would be perpetrated against others, i.e., bosses, coworkers, friends, etc., and not directed at intimate partners.

### **Is it a crime?**

Yes, in every state. The laws vary from state to state. Visit Women's Law Initiative's website ([www.womenslaw.org](http://www.womenslaw.org)) for more information.

### **Is there ever any excuse for domestic violence?**

No. Batterers often come up with excuses and frequently blame the victim, deny the abuse and minimize the severity of their violence. There is never an excuse for abusing anyone and no possible reason for brutality or coercion in a "loving" relationship. We all get angry at people we care for. But domestic violence tends to swing between brutality and "making up," with the level of abuse always rising. It is all about control, not equality.

- El Dorado Women's Center ([www.edwomenscenter.org/FAQ.htm](http://www.edwomenscenter.org/FAQ.htm)), Placerville, CA

### **How can I identify domestic violence?**

The following are questions to ask about your relationship.

## DOES YOUR PARTNER:

- Embarrass you with bad names and put-downs?
- Look at you or act in ways that scare you?
- Control what you do, who you see or talk to, or where you go?
- Stop you from seeing or talking to friends or family?
- Take your money or Social Security check, make you ask for money, or refuse to give you money?
- Make all the decisions?
- Tell you you're a bad parent or threaten to take away or hurt your children?
- Act like the abuse is not a big deal, is your fault, or even deny doing it?
- Destroy your property or threaten to kill your pets?
- Intimidate you with guns, knives, or other weapons?
- Shove you, slap you or hit you?
- Force you to drop charges?
- Threaten to commit suicide?
- Threaten to kill you?

If you checked even one, you may be in an abusive relationship.

- National Domestic Violence Hotline ([www.ndvh.org](http://www.ndvh.org))

## **What are the different types of abuse?**

### PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical abuse is easier to recognize and understand than other types of abuse. It can be indicated when the batterer:

- Scratches, bites, grabs or spits at a current or former intimate partner.
- Shakes, shoves, pushes, restrains or throws her.

- Twists, slaps, punches, strangles or burns the victim.
- Throws objects at her.
- Subjects her to reckless driving.
- Locks her in or out of the house.
- Refuses to help when she's sick, injured or pregnant, or withholds medication or treatment.
- Withholds food as punishment.
- Abuses her at mealtimes, which disrupts eating patterns and can result in malnutrition.
- Abuses her at night, which disrupts sleeping patterns and can result in sleep deprivation.
- Attacks her with weapons or kills her.

#### RAPE AND SEXUAL ABUSE

Rape and sexual abuse can be extraordinarily difficult for victims to talk about because of the unimaginable ways in which this type of violence often is perpetrated. Sexual abuse or rape can be indicated when the batterer:

- Is jealously angry and assumes she will have sex with anyone.
- Withholds sex and affection as punishment.
- Calls her sexual names.
- Pressures her to have sex when she doesn't want to.
- Insists that his partner dresses in a more sexual way than she wants.
- Coerces sex by manipulation or threats.
- Physically forces sex or is violent during a sexual assault.
- Coerces her into sexual acts that she is uncomfortable with, such as sex with a third party, physically painful sex, sexual activity she finds offensive, or verbal degradation during sex.
- Inflicts injuries that are sex-specific.

- Denies the victim contraception or protection against sexually transmitted diseases.

## PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE

It is the abuser's use of physical and sexual force or threats that gives power to his psychologically abusive acts. Psychological abuse becomes an effective weapon in controlling a victim because she knows through experience that her abuser will at times back up the threats or taunts with physical assaults. Psychological abuse can be indicated when the batterer:

- Breaks promises, doesn't follow through on agreements, or doesn't take a fair share of responsibility.
- Verbally attacks and humiliates his partner in private or public.
- Attacks her vulnerabilities, such as her language abilities, educational level, skills as a parent, religious and cultural beliefs, or physical appearance.
- Plays mind games, such as when he denies requests he has made previously or when he undercuts her sense of reality.
- Forces her to do degrading things.
- Ignores her feelings.
- Withholds approval or affection as punishment.
- Regularly threatens to leave or tells her to leave.
- Harasses her about affairs he imagines her to be having.
- Always claims to be right.
- Is unfaithful after committing to monogamy.

## ECONOMIC ABUSE

Economic abuse can be indicated when the batterer:

- Controls all the money.
- Doesn't let her work outside the home or sabotages her attempts to work or go to school.
- Refuses to work and make her support the family.

- Ruins her credit rating.

- *A Framework for Understanding the Nature and Dynamics of Domestic Violence*,  
(<http://www.mocadv.org/Resources/PDFs/dv101.pdf>), Missouri Coalition Against Domestic Violence

## **What can I do about domestic violence?**

Learning about domestic violence and the issues surrounding it will educate you and enable you to recognize that it's everywhere. You can research via the Internet, which is a great source of materials on domestic violence and a way to learn about the domestic violence organizations in your area. Also, reading your local and national newspapers will facilitate your awareness of the issue in your community and on a national level.

Identify domestic violence and help someone if she is a victim. Remember, don't blame the victim for what has happened; instead, be her friend. Provide her with support and local referrals as appropriate. Help her develop a safety plan.

If you're considering volunteering, think about donating your time to a domestic violence victim shelter. It would not only allow you to assist in ending domestic violence, but it would offer a better perspective on the issue.

Contribute to a domestic violence organization in your community.

## **How can I help a woman in an abusive relationship?**

- Support battered women in their efforts to end the violence in their lives. Don't blame them for the abuse.
- Support your local program for battered women: share your time and resources.
- Hold batterers accountable for their violence. Let them know that the community condemns this behavior.
- Think about the ways that society has accepted the use of violence by men to control women's behavior. Re-examine your own attitudes about it.
- Teach young people that violence is not acceptable.
- Examine and discuss how TV programs and movies glamorize violence.
- Learn more about domestic violence and what you can do to stop it.

- *Domestic Violence: Understanding a Community Problem*,  
developed by the National Women Abuse Prevention Project,  
(printed and distributed by the Texas Department of Human Services)

- Listen without judging people in abusive relationships.
- Allow victims to make their own decisions.
- Guide them to community services for professional support.
- Focus on their strengths rather than shortcomings already highlighted in the relationship.
- Help them make a safety plan, including finding a safe place to stay.
- If you have seen an assault in progress, call the police.

- New Mexico Coalition Against Domestic Violence (<http://www.nmcadv.org>),  
Albuquerque, NM

### **What are 5 things to say to a woman who feels she cannot leave?**

“I am afraid for your safety.”

“I am afraid for the safety of your children.”

“It will only get worse.”

“I am here for you when you are ready to leave.”

“You don’t deserve to be abused.”

- National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence

### **What is the relationship between violence and other tactics of control?**

Domestic violence is not an isolated, individual event, but rather a pattern of repeated behaviors. Assaults are repeated against the same victim by the same perpetrator. These assaults occur in different forms, including physical, sexual, psychological and economic. While physical assaults might occur infrequently, other parts of the pattern can occur daily. The use of these other tactics is effective because one battering episode builds on past episodes and sets the stage for future episodes. All tactics of the pattern interact with each other and have profound effects on the victims. Examples of commonly used control tactics include:

#### **ISOLATES THE VICTIM**

- Initially, a batterer might cut the victim off from supportive relationships by claiming “I love you so much” and “I want to be with you all the time.”
- The intent is to control her time and isolate her from her support system of family and friends who might question his actions. For example, he might refuse to have telephone

service or reliable transportation, or he might make the family change residences frequently.

- He might constantly criticize her family and friends, or harass her so much that it is easier for her to cut off contact with them. He might make it impossible for her to have contact by using coercion, threats or force.
- Some victims believe what their abusers say because they are so isolated they have no access to information that might contradict him.

#### USES THE CHILDREN

- The batterer might punish the children as a way to hurt her.
- He might sexually abuse the children or force them to watch the abuse of the victim.
- He might use the children to spy or report on her activities.
- He might threaten to kidnap or kill the children if his partner leaves him.
- He could take the children, gain legal custody, or use custody and visitation arrangements to harass or harm her.

#### DAMAGES RELATIONSHIPS

- The abuser might discredit her relationships with others in the community, such as employers, clergy, friends and neighbors by spreading rumors or distorted information. For example, he might tell others she is “crazy,” unbalanced or a liar.

#### ATTACKS PROPERTY AND PETS

- The abuser might hit the wall next to where the victim is standing or throw objects at her. He might pound the table next to her or break her favorite possessions. He might say: “Look what you made me do,” or, “You’ll be next.”
- The abuser might harm pets to hurt and intimidate her.

#### STALKS PARTNER OR EX-PARTNER

- The abuser might follow, threaten, harass and terrify his partner or ex-partner, especially after she has left or separated from him.
- The abuser might monitor her whereabouts, daily activities or phone conversations to prove to her that she cannot conceal anything from him.

*- A Framework for Understanding the Nature and Dynamics of Domestic Violence,*

## **What are some of the dilemmas in leaving an abusive relationship?**

Leaving a violent relationship is not a simple matter of deciding you don't want to be hit. Each factor must be weighed carefully, because only the abuser can stop the violence.

### PHYSICAL

- Possible Risks If She Stays
  - **Physical injury.** He can continue to hit and injure her.
  - **Death.** He might kill her or the children.
  - **STDs/HIV.** She might have no choice regarding safe-sex practices. He might sexually assault her.
- Possible Risks if She Leaves
  - **Physical injury.** He might continue to injure her. He also might be inclined to escalate the violence after she leaves.
  - **Death.** Leaving doesn't ensure that he won't find her, and it might increase the chance she or the children will be killed.
  - **STDs/HIV.** Unsafe behavior might continue. He might sexually assault her.

### CHILDREN

- Possible Risks if She Stays
  - **Physical injury or psychological harm.** Children can witness violence, be targets themselves, or be hurt trying to protect others.
  - **Loss of children.** He could make false allegations about her of child neglect or abuse. Failure-to-protect arguments could be used to remove children or terminate parental rights.
- Possible Risks if She Leaves
  - **Physical injury or psychological harm.** Children can witness violence, be targets themselves, or be hurt trying to protect others. They might be at greater risk during visitation. Lack of visitation also might affect the children.

- **Loss of children.** He could legally gain custody or just take the children. He could make false allegations or child neglect or abuse. She won't have the money necessary for legal representation in a custody/visitation suit.

## FINANCIAL

- Possible Risks if She Stays
  - **Standard of living.** He might control the money and give her little to live on. He could lose or quit his job. He might make her lose or quit her job.
  - **Loss of income/job.** He could keep her from working, limit how much she works. He might sabotage her efforts to find a job or her success in a job or training program.
  - **Loss of housing.** She could be evicted because of property damage he has done.
  - **Loss of or damage to possessions.** He might destroy things of importance to her.
- Possible Risks if She Leaves
  - **Standard of living.** She might now have to live on less money, relying solely on her own income. She might have to move out of her home and community.
  - **Loss of income/job.** She might have to quit her job and raise her children as a single parent. He might sabotage her efforts to find a job or succeed in a training program.
  - **Loss of housing.** She might have to move out, leave town or go into hiding. She might lose her home in a divorce.
  - **Loss of or damage to possessions.** He might destroy things of importance or value to her. She might have to leave things behind if she flees.

## FAMILY AND FRIENDS

- Possible Risks if She Stays
  - **Physical injury.** He might threaten or injure family or friends, particularly if they try to offer assistance.
  - **Loss of support.** They might want her to leave and might stop supporting her if she stays. They might be afraid of him or not like him. He might keep her isolated from them.
- Possible Risks if She Leaves

- **Physical injury.** He might threaten or injure family or friends, particularly if they try to offer her assistance.
- **Loss of support.** They might not want her to leave and might stop supporting her.

## PSYCHOLOGICAL

- Possible Risks if She Stays
  - **Psychological harm.** Verbal, emotional and physical attacks will continue to affect her.
  - **Substance abuse.** She might use drugs or alcohol to help her cope with the emotional and physical pain.
  - **Suicide.** He might threaten or commit suicide.
- Possible Risks if She Leaves
  - **Psychological harm.** He might have continued access to her, particularly if they have children in common.
  - **Substance abuse.** She might use drugs or alcohol to help her cope with her new situation and past abuse.
  - **Suicide.** He might threaten or commit suicide.

*- A Framework for Understanding the Nature and Dynamics of Domestic Violence*  
(<http://www.mocadv.org/Resources/PDFs/dv101.pdf>), Missouri Coalition Against Domestic Violence

## Why don't victims leave?

- **Fear:** The greatest danger in an abusive relationship often is when a woman tries to leave. FBI crime statistics show more than 40 percent of all female homicides nationwide represent women trying to leave abusive relationships.
- **Lack of resources:** Abusers often isolate victims, offering little outside means to support themselves. Limited finances and few sympathetic friends or relatives make it tougher to leave.
- **Children:** The challenge of raising children alone and the threat by abusers that women might lose custody keeps them from leaving.
- **Guilt:** Victims sometimes believe the abusive person is sick or needs their help. They also are told by some family and friends they should stay for the sake of their marriage or children.

- **Promises to change:** Abusive relationships tend to move in cycles. Following a fight, abusers often apologize and promise it will never happen again.
- **Dependency:** Many women are still taught to be passive and dependent on men. They also worry that leaving a relationship is a form of admitting they failed.
- **Immigrants and Spanish speakers:** Such women often are isolated from the community and believe they cannot turn to police for help. Even legal immigrants are told by abusers they will be deported or lose their children if they report the violence.

- New Mexico Coalition Against Domestic Violence (<http://www.nmcadv.org>),  
Albuquerque, NM

## **What is the relationship between poverty and domestic violence?**

Domestic violence permeates all social groups defined by race, ethnicity, and economic circumstances, yet it is clear that the combined experience of poverty and violence raises particularly difficult issues for women and their children. This reality has been underscored by several studies in the past 10-15 years documenting the importance of economic resources for battered women's decision making. Several recent studies have explored the connections between domestic violence against impoverished women and their use of public assistance.

Taken together, the studies indicated disturbingly high rates of domestic violence in the lives of impoverished women, along with high rates of physical and mental health problems. It is important to note as well that the studies also provide indications of women's astounding resiliency. The picture that emerges at this stage of knowledge is complex: A majority of women on public assistance have experienced violence by intimate partners or in childhood, and they have been affected in widely different ways and to different degrees.

Economic independence and employment are central considerations in women's safety. Each battered woman faces unique risks and thus has unique needs for safety and self-sufficiency. In some cases, determining what a particular battered women needs is as simple as asking her.

- *A Framework for Understanding the Nature and Dynamics of Domestic Violence*,  
(<http://www.mocadv.org/Resources/PDFs/dv101.pdf>), Missouri Coalition Against Domestic Violence

## **Are children affected by witnessing domestic violence?**

Researchers estimate that between 3 million and 10 million children in the United States are exposed to domestic violence each year. They can be harmed by:

- Intentional injuries inflicted by the perpetrator.
- Unintentional injuries from violence directed at the parent.

- An atmosphere in which they directly witness violence or the aftermath of an attack.
- Emotional abuse when they are used as pawns to coercively control the abused parent.

Domestic violence affects children in varied and complex ways that can be exhibited in their emotional, behavioral, social and physical development. These problems, when compared with children who have not witnessed domestic violence, can include aggression, depression, anxiety, lower levels of self-esteem, and below-average academic performance.

Witnessing domestic violence, especially when coupled with direct abuse or exposure to other forms of violence, also has been identified as likely influence and predictor of a child's condoning or use of violence, particularly for boys. Children also might lose respect for their mother – and women in general – if her abuser constantly tells her she is worthless and unable to care for her children. These children also must contend with conflicting emotions about a father they both fear and love.

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(<http://www.mocadv.org/Resources/PDFs/dv101.pdf>), Missouri Coalition Against Domestic Violence

### **Are there any personal safety tips related to domestic violence?**

Yes. Here are a few tips to keep you safe:

- **WHEN A FIGHT BREAKS OUT**
  - Move away from the kitchen, bathroom, or anyplace where they are dangerous sharp objects.
  - Plan the easiest escape. Decide on a door or window to exit quickly and safely.
  - Find a neighbor, friend, or family member you can trust to help you and your children, or to call police.
- **IF YOU DECIDE TO LEAVE YOUR PARTNER, PLAN FOR SAFETY**
  - Every situation is different! Contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline for information on how to plan for safety. Leaving may be risky for you and your children [1-800-799-SAFE or 1-800-787-3224 (TTY for the deaf)].
  - Put some money away. Even if you only save a little bit every week, you need to have some money of your own.
  - Make copies of keys and important papers and leave them with a friend, neighbor, or church. Some important items to have: birth certificates, legal papers, a little money, special toys.

- **WAYS TO STAY SAFE ON YOUR OWN**

- Change the locks on your doors.
- Learn about your legal rights. If you have legal papers to protect you, keep them with you at all times.
- Tell neighbors, friends, landlords or coworkers that your partner no longer lives with you. Keep a safety plan for coming and going, and share it with people you trust. Teach your children about the safety plan.
- If your former partner is dangerous, find someone at work to tell. Show a picture, and ask them to call 911 if your former partner comes around.
- If you need other ideas or a local referral, call us.

- National Domestic Violence Hotline (<http://www.ndvh.org/>)

- When a fight breaks out: Stay away from sharp objects, plan the easiest escape, teach your children how to stay away from fights and choose a code word signaling children, friends and family that they need to call police.
- If you decide to leave: Talk with domestic violence support services, friends and family about developing a safe plan to leave. Set aside important documents, money, keys, medication, clothing, children's favorite toys and phone cards.
- Stay safe after you leave: Change the locks on your doors, learn your legal rights, tell neighbors and friends your partner no longer lives with you, inform your child's day care and develop a safety plan to deal with an attack.
- Be safe at work: Inform co-workers and security guards about your situation, providing a photograph of the abuser and a copy of a protective order. Screen your telephone calls. Be cautious when leaving the office and vary your routine.

- New Mexico Coalition Against Domestic Violence (<http://www.nmcadv.org/>),  
Albuquerque, NM

## **What can men do to end domestic violence?**

- **Recognize** that domestic violence is every man's responsibility.
- **Speak up.** Don't be a silent bystander.
- **Challenge** men who use sexist language and make degrading jokes about women.
- **Ask a woman** how the threat of violence impacts her life. Listen & learn from women.

- **Think** about how our attitudes and language contribute to the problem of men's abuse of women.
- **Call 911.** Domestic violence is not a private matter – it's a crime.
- **Recognize** that degrading images of women in the media are linked to violence against women.
- **Boycott** magazines, videos, and music that promote violence against women.
- **Talk** to and teach boys and young men about healthy relationships. Walk the talk and be a good role model.
- **Seek help** if you have a problem with being emotionally or physically abusive.
- **Join** other concerned men and women to address gender violence through groups such as Men Against Violence and the Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance.
- **Support anti-violence campaigns in your community!** There is usually an organization that is doing something to end violence. Support these activities.

- Community Anti-Violence Alliance, Inc. (CAVA), Steuben County, IN

*For information about a local domestic violence program or to talk with someone who can help, call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE or 1-800-787-3224 (TTY for the deaf).*

**Compiled by Crystal Wick, Communications Specialist, January 2004. Distributed by:**



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