

Defining Domestic Violence

Domestic violence (also referred to as intimate partner violence (IPV), dating abuse, or relationship abuse) is a pattern of behaviors used by one partner to maintain power and control over another partner in an intimate relationship.

Domestic violence doesn't discriminate. People of any race, age, gender, sexuality, religion, education level, or economic status can be a victim — or perpetrator — of domestic violence. That includes behaviors that physically harm, intimidate, manipulate or control a partner, or otherwise force them to behave in ways they don't want to, including through physical violence, threats, emotional abuse, or financial control.

- National Domestic Violence Hotline

Remember!

No survivor or victim ever deserves the abuse they receive from their partner. It is not their fault, and they did nothing to make their abuser hurt them.

Abusive behavior can take several forms, and in most abusive relationships, there may be several forms of abuse happening all at once.

Abuse is not always physical, emotional and verbal abuse can be just as lethal and dangerous as physical abuse.

Abusive Behavior Can Include:



Physical



Verbal



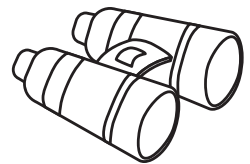
Digital



Sexual



Financial



Stalking

Understanding Intimate Partner Violence:

A Guide for Family and Friends

Why Don't They Just Leave?

In an abusive relationship there are countless reasons why a person might decide to stay. The abuser may have isolated the victim away from friends, family and resources, the victim may have no access to money, or they may be ashamed of their situation. No matter what is keeping that person in their relationship, it is not your place to judge. In many cases the abuser has used power and control to instill fear into their partners. Leaving an abusive relationship is the MOST DANGEROUS time for a victim.

Here are some reasons why a victim may stay:

- Thinking the abuse is their fault
- Lack of support from friends/family
- Having no other place to go
- Not having money or a job
- Cultural or religious beliefs
- Wanting to keep their family together
- Love for their partner
- Hope the abuse will stop

How To Talk to a Victim



“I’m sorry this happened to you”

“It is not your fault”

“No one deserves to be abused”

“You are not alone”

“There is help”

“How can I support you?”

If Someone You Know is Being Abused

- Support them and listen to them
- Understand that they might not be able or ready to leave the relationship
- Let them know that you are a safe person to talk or come to
- Remember you are not their therapist, and you cannot fix this situation for them
- Let them make their own decisions
- Help them create a safety plan
- If they decide to leave, be sure to remain supportive and in contact afterward
- Help them find resources or counseling
- Remember to take care of yourself. We cannot care for others if we don't care for ourselves
- Pass on Heartly House's Hotline 301-662-8800 or the National DV Hotline: 800-799-7233