

# Confronting Domestic Violence

**Information You Need to Know**



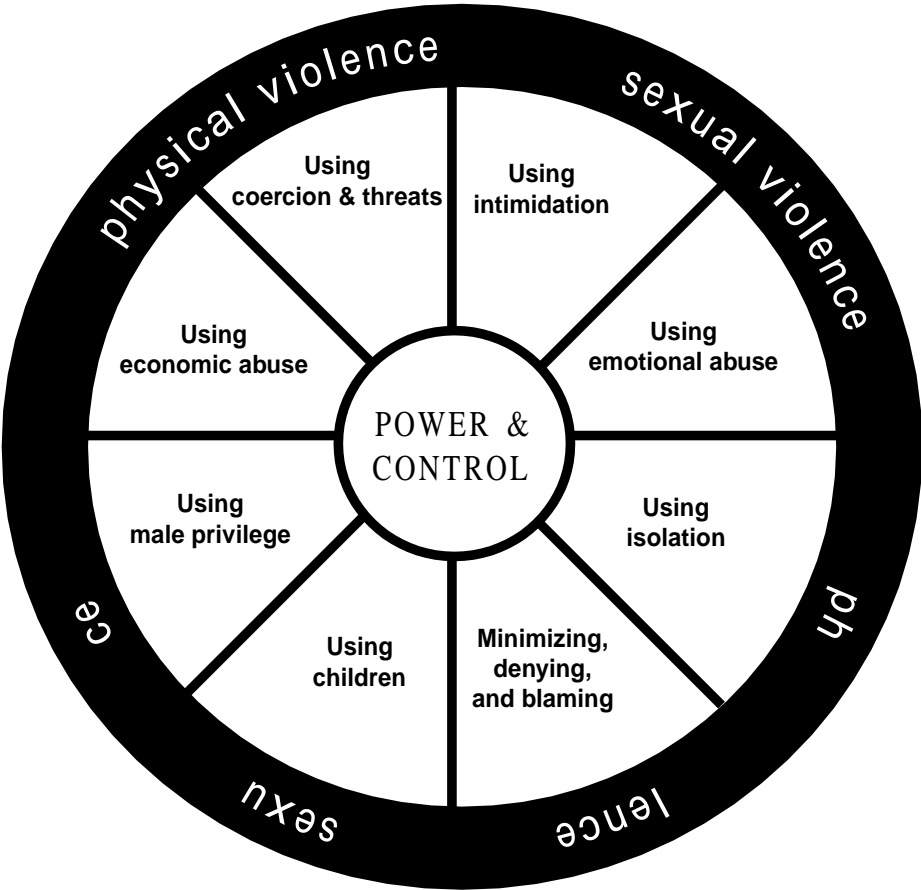
This brochure is being distributed by:

**James C. Backstrom**  
Dakota County Attorney

and

**Don Gudmundson**  
Dakota County Sheriff

Domestic violence can occur in many ways. Many abusers feel the need to have power and control in the relationship. These methods help the abuser gain power and control.



**DOMESTIC ABUSE INTERVENTION PROJECT**

*DULUTH, MINNESOTA 55806  
218-722-4134*

# What is Domestic Violence

**Domestic Violence is:** abuse within a personal relationship. Violence or abuse itself takes many forms. It can be physical, emotional, verbal and/or psychological.

**Physical Violence:** Punching, hitting, slapping, biting, choking, pinching, pushing, shoving, kicking or using a weapon to cause or threaten physical harm;

**Physical Restraint:** Using force or the threat of force to keep another from leaving, or to move another from one place to another;

**Sexual Abuse:** Unwanted sexual contact of any kind;

**Threats:** To commit any of the above.

## Where the Abuser and the Victim have a personal relationship:

Are current or former spouses;

Have or have had an intimate relationship;

Have a child together; or unborn child together;

Are related by blood or marriage;

Are family members residing in the same household.

## Domestic Violence Can Happen To Anyone

Domestic violence occurs among all races, ages and religions. It occurs in heterosexual and homosexual relationships. It happens to people of all educational and income levels. It happens in the city, in the suburbs and in rural areas. In the United States, approximately 95% of all victims of domestic violence are women.

## Who is a “Typical” Abuser

- ✘ There is no typical abuser, however, persons who abuse have several common behaviors/beliefs:
- ✘ Many abusers are not violent in other relationships, such as at work or with friends.
- ✘ Many abusers have a rigid, traditional view of sex roles and parenting.
- ✘ Many abusers feel compelled to dominate and control their relationship with their partners.
- ✘ Abusers believe violence is an acceptable and effective way to resolve problems.
- ✘ Abusers typically believe they are entitled to their victim’s obedience and service.
- ✘ Abusers are more focused on their own needs than on the pain or fear that their violence causes their victims.

Approximately 80% of abusers grow up in a violent home.

- ✘ Abusing is a learned behavior, not a mental illness. The abuser’s experience as a child and messages he/she gets from society in general, tell him/her that violence is an effective way to achieve power and control over his/her partner’s behavior.
- ✘ Alcoholism or drug abuse do not cause abusive behavior. Intoxication may only intensify an already existing violent behavior.
- ✘ Abusers characteristically deny the existence or severity of their violence. When confronted with their abusive behavior, they tend to blame their partner for provoking it or refuse to accept responsibility for it.
- ✘ Abusers try to limit the relationships their partner has, so there are fewer people to assist the victim. Abusers may be extremely jealous of any relationships their partner has outside the home.

In the United States, 33% of the women murdered are killed by their husbands, ex-husbands or boyfriends.

# The Nature of Domestic Violence

Victims of domestic violence come from all walks of life. The vast majority of victims are women. She may be your mother, sister, friend, coworker or neighbor. They do not provoke or deserve it.

Because of religious, cultural or socially learned beliefs, a woman may feel that it is her duty to keep a marriage or relationship together at all costs.

Some women will endure physical and emotional abuse to keep the family together. Very often, it is when the violence is directed toward her children that she will take them and leave.

A victim may distance herself from family and friends for many reasons including the fear that others may blame her for it.

A woman may be financially dependent on her partner. Statistically, a woman who leaves the home has at least a 50% chance that her standard of living will drop below the poverty level.

Submission is forced on victims. Submission to violence is not the result of an inherent defect in the victim. The abuser has often threatened to harm the victim's children, friends, family or himself if she leaves.

A woman is often in the most physical danger when she attempts to leave. She may be threatened or attacked. She fears for her safety, her children's safety and the safety of those who help her. Some men feel that if they can't have her, they'll make sure no one else can.

If all women victimized by domestic violence joined hands, the line would stretch from New York City to Los Angeles and beyond.

In the United States, 10% of all domestic relationships may involve domestic abuse.

## How Does Domestic Violence Affect Children

More than half of the children whose mothers are abused are also victims of physical abuse. Older children are often injured while trying to protect their mothers.

Children who watch their mother being abused suffer emotional trauma and psychological scars.

Children in violent homes live with fear, instability and confusion. They live in fear of physical harm from the person who is supposed to care for and protect them. They may blame themselves for causing the violence and feel guilty about leaving the abuser.

Children from violent homes may experience many stress-related physical ailments, and hearing and speech problems.

Children from violent homes are at higher risk for alcohol abuse, drug abuse, juvenile delinquency and suicide.

In the United States, 3.3 to 10 million children witness the abuse of a woman each year. One-third to one-half of those children have also been beaten by the abuser—usually the woman's current or former partner. Two-thirds of boys who witness abuse become violent in their adult relationships and one-third of girls who witness abuse find themselves in violent relationships.

# Spankey Gets Earplugs



written and Illustrated  
by Dominic  
©1996

I dedicate this book to my mom.

Spankey is a boy who lives with his mom and dad. His house is very noisy because they fight a lot.

One day Spankey steals money from his mom's purse. So he can buy earplugs. He wore his earplugs everywhere he went.

When he went to school his friend Joe said, "What's in your ears?"

Spankey said, "What? I can't hear you, I have plugs in my ears."

Joe said, "Why?"

Spankey said, "I don't want to hear my mom fight with my dad. I'm wearing them till they get a divorce."

# How Does Domestic Violence Affect The Community

Domestic violence results in increased social service and criminal justice costs, including the response to the immediate problem and the cost of future behavior problems in children exposed to domestic violence.

In the United States, an act of domestic violence occurs every 9 seconds.

Family violence costs the nation approximately \$67 billion annually in medical expenses, labor force, child well-being, housing, social services, health care and criminal justice. (*Institute for Women's Policy Research, 1996*)

Husbands and boyfriends commit 13,000 acts of violence against women in the workplace every year. (*Violence and Theft in the Workplace, U.S. Department of Justice, July, 1994*)

In the United States, 37% of all women who use emergency room services have been victims of domestic violence.

Domestic violence is responsible for 25% of workplace problems such as absenteeism, lower productivity, turnover and excessive use of medical benefits. (*Minnesota Employee Assistant Providers*)

In the United States, help exists for the victims of domestic violence by way of shelters and community advocacy services. If you are a victim, please report your abuse to police and seek help.



# Relationship Test

These are some of the signs of an abusive relationship:

Does your partner:

- ✘ Isolate you from friends & family, act jealous or possessive?
- ✘ Shout, call you names, throw things?
- ✘ Give orders, make all of the decisions or act bossy?
- ✘ Threaten, scare, own or use weapons?
- ✘ Get violent; have a history of fighting, lose his/her temper quickly, brag about mistreating others?
- ✘ Threaten to hurt you or others if you end the relationship?
- ✘ Think women or girls are sex objects; get too serious about the relationship too fast, act forcefully about obtaining sex?
- ✘ Abuse drugs or alcohol?
- ✘ Have a history of bad relationships and blame the other person for all the problems?
- ✘ Believe men should be in control and women submissive?
- ✘ Blame you for his/her behavior?
- ✘ Frequently accuse you of things you didn't do?
- ✘ Constantly criticize your body or looks?
- ✘ Tell you how lucky you are to have him/her, since no one else would want you?

Do you protect your partner when they mistreat you, rationalize their behavior or blame yourself?

What to do:

- ✘ Call an advocate at an abused women's program, which offers many free resources.
- ✘ Become informed.
- ✘ Lend a sympathetic ear to someone you believe may be in an abusive relationship.
- ✘ Talk to a friend or family member about the danger.
- ✘ Obtain a restraining order prohibiting the abuser from contacting you or being near your home or workplace.
- ✘ Call the police if you have been assaulted or victimized.
- ✘ Develop a safety plan with the help of a friend or advocate.

# Minnesota Laws Relating To Domestic Violence

The County Attorney's Office prosecutes all felony offenses and certain specified misdemeanors or gross misdemeanors such as malicious punishment of a child. The County Attorney also prosecutes all levels of crime in the unincorporated areas of the County. City attorneys prosecute most misdemeanor and gross misdemeanor offenses which occur within city limits.

**When domestic violence occurs, an abuser could face prosecution for a variety of crimes including:**

Murder/Manslaughter

Assault

Terroristic Threats

Criminal Sexual Conduct

Kidnapping

False Imprisonment

Malicious Punishment of a Child

Child Endangerment

Interference with a 911 Call

Burglary

Criminal Damage to Property

Violation of a Restraining Order

Reckless Use of Firearms

Theft

# Orders For Protection

Minnesota law provides for orders of the Court protecting victims of domestic violence.

**What is an OFP?:** An OFP is a court order for protection, signed by the judge, ordering the abuser (Respondent) to stop hurting or harassing the victim (Petitioner). The victim may be able to obtain a Temporary Order for Protection through Dakota County District Court. An Order for Protection may direct the abuser to:

- ✘ Stop abusive conduct
- ✘ Leave the household
- ✘ Stay away from the victim, the victim's home or area around the home, work place, school, and the victim's children or other family members
- ✘ Visit the children only at stated times and places under certain conditions
- ✘ Pay child support and keep insurance in place

**Penalty:** Violation of an Order for Protection is a misdemeanor. Subsequent violations may be gross misdemeanors or felonies.

**Mandatory Arrest Policy:** If the abuser violates the OFP by contacting the victim or coming to the victim's residence or work place, the law requires that the abuser be arrested and brought to jail.

**How to Obtain an OFP:** Forms are available at all Dakota County Court facilities. There is no filing fee required and the orders are served on the Respondent at no cost to the Petitioner. Dakota County also has an OFP "hotline" which explains the process in detail for both Petitioners and Respondents. Metro Area: (952) 985-1200, Non-Metro: 1-800-293-8451.

In the United States more than 50,000 women  
seek protective orders every month.

**Additional Assistance:** Abused women's programs also provide women with advocates to appear with them in court and help them with the paperwork involved. **In Dakota County, for further information call the B. Robert Lewis House: (651) 452-7288 / (651) 437-1291. Safety plans are also available at the Dakota County Courts.**

## RESOURCES FOR THE VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN DAKOTA COUNTY

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR LEGAL RIGHTS AND  
OPTIONS**, contact an advocate at your local shelter.

### ABUSED WOMEN'S PROGRAMS

CAC's Lewis House- <b>Eagan</b>	(651)452-7288
TDD/TTY	(651)405-9455
<b>Hastings</b>	(651)437-1291
TDD	(651)437-2838
<b>Out of Area</b>	1-800-336-SAFE
Women's Advocates, Inc.	(651)227-9966
Casa de Esperanza	(651)772-1611
Tubman's Family Alliance	(612)825-3333
Women of Nations	Crisis Line: (651)222-5836 or Toll Free (877)-209-1266

### POLICE/LAW ENFORCEMENT

Apple Valley	(952)953-2700
Burnsville	(952)895-4600
Eagan	(651)675-5700
Farmington	(651)280-6700
Hastings	(651)480-2300
Inver Grove Heights	(651)450-2525
Lakeville	(952)985-2800
Mendota Heights/Mendota	(952)452-1366
Northfield	1(507)645-4475
Rosemount	(651)423-4491
South St. Paul	(651)554-3300
West St. Paul	(651)552-4200
Dakota County Sheriff	(651)438-4700
Civil (service of orders)	(651)438-4780

### OTHER EMERGENCY OR INFORMATION NUMBERS

CAC's Sexual Assault Services	(651)405-1500
Crisis Response Unit (for emotional/psychiatric crises)	(952)891-7171
OutFront Minnesota (GLBT)	(612)822-0127
Children's Safety Centers	(651)774-4990
Dakota County Attorney's Victim/Witness Program	(651)438-4438
Dakota County Courthouse Numbers:	
Apple Valley	(952)891-7256 (family 7243)
West St. Paul	(651)554-6200 (family 6206)
Hastings	(651)438-8100 (family (8110))
Dakota County Legal Assistance	(651)431-3200
Dakota County Jail	(651)438-4800
OFP Hotline	
Apple Valley	(952-891-7243)
Hastings	(651)438-8110
West St. Paul	(651)554-6200
United Way (information & referrals)	211 or (651)438-3337