

DID YOU KNOW?

- ◆ Abuse takes many forms: emotional or spiritual torment, verbal threats, physical force, social isolation, sexual assault and/or financial manipulation.
- ◆ Although domestic violence victims are more likely to be women, people of all genders, ages, races, ethnicities, socio-economic statuses, relationship statuses, education levels and sexual orientations can be victims of domestic violence.
- ◆ One in four women experiences domestic violence in her lifetime. Most assaults are never reported.
- ◆ In some cases, an abuser may exhibit “Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde” behaviors, showing extremes in both kindness and cruelty. Others seldom see or suspect this person of explosive rage.
- ◆ Domestic violence is a learned behavior that increases in frequency and severity. Children who grow up in abusive households are 42% more likely to perpetuate the cycle of violence as adults.

IF YOU KNOW A VICTIM:

- 1. Approach the victim in private.** Speaking to someone who is in a domestic violence situation in front of others, or his or her abuser, may actually increase the victim’s risk of injury.
- 2. Use non-judgmental language and an empathetic approach:**
 - “I’m afraid for your safety.”*
 - “I’m afraid for the safety of your children.”*
 - “We’re here for you when you are ready or able to leave.”*
 - “You deserve better than this”*
 - “What can I do to help you?”*
- 3. Believe the victim.** Doubting or minimizing the abuse only heightens the victim’s feelings of guilt, fear and helplessness.
- 4. Support the victim.** Give encouragement, information and referrals to agencies and services. It may take time for a victim to be ready to leave. Be supportive whether or not the victim leaves.
- 5. Speak out.** Make the problem of abuse heard. Awareness precedes choice. Choice precedes change.

IF YOU ARE A VICTIM:

- 1. Call or text the police at 911. City of Fairfax (703) 591-5511** Insist upon a report.
- 2. Seek medical care immediately.** Go to the emergency room for immediate attention. Let the doctor know you’ve been abused.
- 3. Keep detailed records** of abusive incidents in a safe place; include photos of injuries.
- 4. Know your resources** in case you need to leave abruptly. Arrange to stay with friends or family, rent a room or call the shelter for emergency housing. **Your safety is the bottom line.**
- 5. Do not let your partner isolate you** from those who might help you in the future. Talk to someone you trust.
- 6. Violence can occur in cycles:** Tension building, blow up and the honeymoon phase, promising “It will never happen again.”
- 7. Consider obtaining a protective order** to limit or prohibit contact from the abuser. **(703) 246-3040**

Blaming a victim only justifies the abuser’s behavior.

BE PREPARED

If a violent episode seems imminent, leave before the attack happens. Trust your instincts. Plan ahead.

Have quick access to the following:

1. A plan of action, including an escape route. Make sure your children know the escape route. Consider your pets in your plan.
2. Important telephone numbers, addresses and this pamphlet.
3. Cash, blank checks and savings account numbers.
4. Changes of clothes and medications for you and your children.
5. Keys (have extras made and hide them outside the house.)
6. A cell phone and charger if you have one.
7. Personal documents: medical and income tax records, marriage and birth certificates, protective injunctions, immigration papers, tax returns, Social Security numbers for yourself and your children, etc.

LOCAL RESOURCES

24-hour Domestic Violence hotline
(703) 360-7273
Domestic & Sexual Violence Services
counseling, advocacy, hospital and
court accompaniment.

Artemis House Shelter
(703) 435-4940
A safe, supportive, confidential
location for victims and their children
who may be in imminent danger
fleeing domestic violence.

Protective Order
(703) 246-3040
Juvenile & Domestic Relations Court
to limit/prohibit contact from the
abuser.

CSB Mental Health, Substance Use
(703) 383-8500

Domestic Violence Action Center
(703) 246-4573

ADAPT
(703) 968-4052
Anger and Domestic Abuse Prevention
and Treatment Program for abusers.



City of Fairfax
Commission for Women
(703) 385-7894 (TTY 711)
cfw@fairfaxva.gov

**Someone you know
may need help...**



City of Fairfax
Commission for
Women
Seeks to Protect
Women and Children