
Domestic violence involves a pattern of controlling and abusive (sometimes violent) behaviors that some people use against their intimate partners. Abuse can be physical, sexual, or emotional, and may include threats, isolation, financial control, and stalking.

Does your partner ever...

- Hit, kick, shove or injure you?
- Use weapons to hurt or threaten you?
- Force or coerce you into unwanted sexual activity?
- Make threats to hurt you or others, to have you deported, or to share private information about you?
- Control what you do or who you see in a way that interferes with your work, parenting, education, health care, or other necessary activities?
- Steal your money or destroy your belongings?
- Constantly criticize you, call you names or put you down?
- Deny your basic needs such as food, housing, clothing, medical or other assistance?

If you answered “yes” to any of these, your health and safety may be at risk.

It Can Happen to Anyone

Domestic violence is a very common and serious problem that can affect a person’s physical and emotional health. It can happen to anyone, no matter who you are or where you come from.

It Is Not Your Fault

If you are being abused by your partner, you may feel confused, afraid, angry or trapped. All of these emotions are normal responses to abuse. You may also blame yourself for what is happening. But no matter what, you are never responsible for your partner’s abusive actions.

No one deserves to be abused.

Identify Support

Developing a support system can be very important. There are many people and places that might be helpful; friends, family, co-workers, community groups, faith leaders, health care providers, counselors, teachers, and domestic violence program advocates are just some examples.

Domestic Violence Is a Crime

If you have been injured, raped, or threatened as a result of domestic violence (or if you witness someone committing these crimes) you can call 911 for police or medical assistance.

Another option is to go to court to request a restraining order directing the abuser not to hurt you, or to stay away from places such as your home, work, or school. The order can also include protections for your children and pets.

There are many more sources of protection and support for victims of domestic violence. Contact the resources listed on the back of this brochure to learn more about *your* rights and options.

Planning for Safety

Without help, domestic violence often gets worse over time. It can sometimes become deadly. **Trust your instincts**; if you think you are in danger, you probably are. Don't ignore your fears. You may want to:

- **Memorize** phone numbers of people who can help you or hotlines.
- **Plan escape routes** and places you can go if you need to get away quickly.
- **Talk with your children** about what they can do if they are feeling unsafe or afraid.
- **Put together an emergency bag** with money, medicine, car keys, important papers such as birth certificates, social security cards, immigration documents. Keep it somewhere safe or with a friend.
- **Tell others that you trust** about what is happening and talk about how they can help.

Help is Available

24 hr Help:

SafeLink

1-877-785-2020

(TTY 1-877-521-2601)

<http://www.casamyrna.org>

Boston Area Rape Crisis Center

1-800-841-8371

<http://www.barcc.org>

National Domestic Violence Hotline

<http://www.thehotline.org>

1-800-799-7233

1-800 787-3224 (TTY)

Help available in over 140 languages

For More Information Please Call:

BMC Domestic Violence Program

617-414-7734

Additional Resources for BMC Employees

Employee Assistance Program

1-866-695-6327 (24hr)

Public Safety Department

617-414-4444 (24hr)

<http://internal.bmc.org/domesticviolence>

This program is partially supported by MOVA through the 1984 VOCA grant from Office for Victims of Crime, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice

Finding Safety and Support



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