

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Domestic Violence is a pattern of coercive tactics that are used to gain and maintain power and control in an intimate relationship, within families, or in care giving relationships. Generally, over time, several forms of abuse, such as emotional, verbal, psychological, physical, sexual and/or financial, are used in combination.

Statistics

In Wisconsin in 2017 at least 62 people died as a result of domestic violence. Nationally, 1 in 4 women and nearly 1 in 10 men have experienced physical violence, sexual assault, and/or stalking by an intimate partner, and 1 in 3 teens in the U.S. is a victim of physical, sexual, emotional or verbal abuse from a dating partner.

Examples of Domestic Violence

Isolation from family and friends, refusing access to finances, name-calling, threats, intimidation, control over where the partner can go and what they can do, minimizing or denying the abuse, blaming the victim for the abuse, destroying property or abusing pets, unwanted sexual acts, and pushing, slapping, or hitting.

Why don't they just leave?

There are many barriers that make leaving an abusive relationship difficult. Reasons include fear of themselves or their children being hurt or killed, financial dependence on the abusive partner, still loving them and hoping they will change, embarrassment about the abuse, fear that others will not support or believe them, wanting to keep the family together, feeling obligated to stay for religious or cultural reasons, and not knowing about supportive resources.

#1 Thing

The 2019 national theme is #1Thing. Each of us can do one thing to help end domestic violence. What will be your one thing?

What can I do to be helpful?

- Listen, believe, and support the survivor. Tell them that the abuse is not their fault, and the abuse is not God's will. Tell them that they are not alone and that help is available.
- Talk to the survivor in private. Tell them you're concerned for their safety and that you are there to help. Offer to call a helpline with them or to accompany them to a domestic violence services center.
- Don't talk with the abusive partner unless you know it is safe for yourself and for the survivor for you to do so. If it's safe, hold them accountable – don't minimize their abusive behavior. Support them in seeking specialized batterers' counseling to help change their behavior.
- If you see or hear physical violence, call 911.
- Role model respectful behavior and teach youth about healthy relationships that are based on respect, equality, trust, honesty, good communication, support, and shared responsibility.

For more information, please visit

- www.TheHotline.org
- www.FaithTrustInstitute.org
- www.FuturesWithoutViolence.org
- www.EndAbuseWI.org

Free and Confidential Services

Hope House of South Central Wisconsin provides advocacy and shelter services to people affected by domestic violence and sexual assault. Services include a 24/7 helpline, 24/7 on-call emergency response, individual counseling, legal assistance, support groups, shelter services, children's programming, and community education.



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