

It Shouldn't Hurt to Go Home



The Domestic Violence Victim's Handbook



The Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV) has been working since 1980 to eliminate domestic violence in Maryland

through *education, training, and advocacy*. As Maryland's state coalition, the Network works together with local domestic violence programs as well as criminal justice and law enforcement personnel, legal advocates, health care and social service providers, clergy, educators, businesses, community groups, and concerned individuals to promote *a coordinated community response to end domestic violence*. The MNADV is a private, not-for-profit 501 (c) (3) organization.

Domestic violence is a pattern of coercive behavior characterized by the domination and control of one person over another, usually an intimate partner, through physical, psychological, emotional, verbal, sexual, and/or economic abuse.



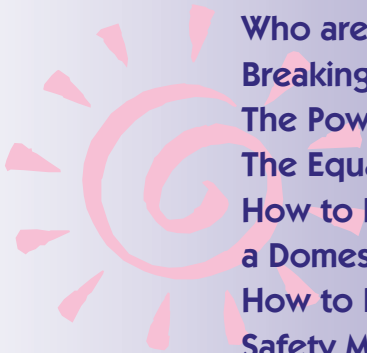
This booklet was adapted from the original booklet created by the Idaho Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence.

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The Domestic Violence Victim's Handbook

Table of Contents

Now is the Time	2
Where to Turn for Help	3
What is Domestic Violence?	4
Don't Believe These Domestic Violence Myths	6
Who are the Victims?	8
Who are the Abusers?	9
Breaking the Cycle of Violence	10
The Power and Control Wheel	12
The Equality Wheel	13
How to Help a Friend Who is a Domestic Violence Victim	14
How to Let Your Friends Help You	15
Safety Measures While You're in an Abusive Relationship	16
Safety After You Have Left the Relationship	17
Your Personal Safety Plan	18
Domestic Violence Programs in Maryland	20
National Information Centers	Back Inside Cover



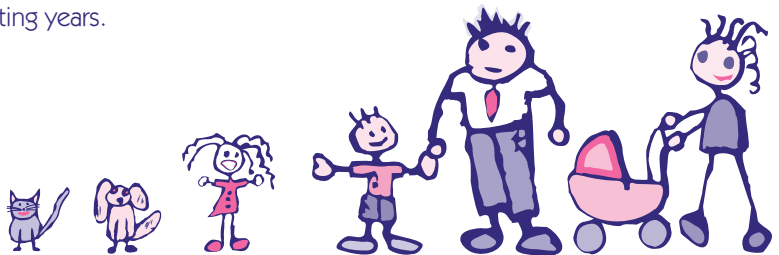
Now is the Time

If you are a victim of domestic violence, now is the time to protect yourself and those who count on you for safety.

You don't deserve to be abused. There is help.

Facts

- ◆ 1 out of every 4 American women (26%) report that they have been physically abused by a husband or boyfriend at some point in their lives.
- ◆ Every 15 seconds a woman is battered in the United States by her husband, boyfriend or live-in partner.
- ◆ Women are 85-95% of the victims of intimate violence.
- ◆ Violence by an intimate accounts for about 21% of the violent crime experienced by women and about 2% of the violence sustained by males.
- ◆ At least 25% of domestic violence victims are pregnant when beaten.
- ◆ Between 50% and 70% of men who abuse their female partners also abuse their children.
- ◆ At least 3.3 million children between the ages of 3 and 19 are at risk of exposure to parental violence every year.
- ◆ One third of high school and college students experience violence in an intimate relationship during their dating years.



MNADV Statewide Helpline
1-800-MD-HELPS
(1-800-634-3577)
National Domestic Violence Hotline
1-800-799-7233



Call the local domestic violence program
in your county (see page 20) for:

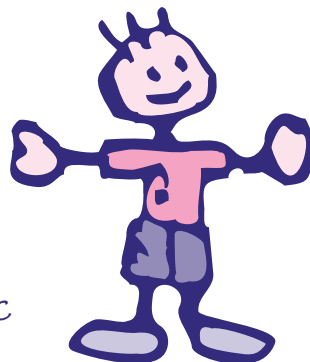
- ◆ 24 hour crisis hotline
- ◆ Telephone translation services for non-English speakers
- ◆ Temporary emergency shelter for victims and their children
- ◆ Counseling for victims, abusers, and children
- ◆ Legal information and court accompaniment
- ◆ Referrals to legal, medical, financial, housing and employment services

Where
to
Turn
for
Help

What is Domestic Violence?

Domestic violence can take different forms, but its purpose is always the same: Abusers want to control their domestic partners through fear. They do this by abusing them physically, sexually, psychologically, verbally, and economically.

Here are some of the forms domestic violence can take:



Physical Abuse

Hitting	Slapping
Kicking	Choking
Pushing	Punching
Beating	

Verbal Abuse

Constant criticism	Mocking
Making humiliating remarks	Yelling
Name-calling	Swearing
	Interrupting

Sexual Abuse

Forcing sex on an unwilling partner
Demanding sexual acts that the victim does not want to perform
Degrading treatment

Isolation

Making it hard for the victim to see friends and relatives
Monitoring phone calls
Reading mail
Controlling where the victim goes
Taking the victim's car keys
Destroying the victim's passport

Coercion

Making the victim feel guilty
Sulking
Manipulating children and other family members
Always insisting on being right
Making up impossible "rules" and punishing the victim for breaking them

Harassment

Following or stalking
Embarrassing the victim in public
Constantly checking up
on the victim
Refusing to leave when asked

Economic Control

Not paying bills
Refusing to give the victim money
Not letting the victim work
Interfering with the victim's job
Prohibiting the victim from
going to school
Not allowing the victim to
learn a job skill
Refusing to work and support
the family

Abusing Trust

Lying
Breaking promises
Withholding important information
Being unfaithful
Being overly
jealous
Not sharing
domestic
responsibilities



Threats and Intimidation

Threatening to harm the victim,
the children, family members
and pets
Using physical size to intimidate
Shouting
Keeping weapons and threatening
to use them

Emotional Withholding

Not expressing feelings
Not giving compliments
Not paying attention
Not respecting the victim's
feelings, rights and opinions
Not taking the victim's concerns
seriously

Destruction of Property

Destroying furniture
Punching walls
Throwing or breaking things
Abusing pets

Self-Destructive Behaviors

Abusing drugs or alcohol
Threatening self-harm or suicide
Driving recklessly
Deliberately doing things that
will cause trouble

(See **Power & Control Wheel** on Page 12)

Don't Believe These

You can't believe everything you read and hear about domestic violence. Here are ten common "myths" about domestic violence. They are not true.

Myth #1:

Domestic violence does not affect many people.

It is believed that domestic violence is the most common, but least reported, crime in the United States.

Myth #2:

Domestic violence is only physical abuse.

Physical violence is only part of a larger pattern of abuse, which also includes psychological, emotional, sexual and/or economic abuse. Sometimes there is no physical abuse, but the abuser will use the other forms of abuse to exert power and control over an intimate partner.

Myth #3:

Domestic abuse is just a momentary loss of temper.

Domestic abuse is just the opposite of a "momentary loss of temper." The abuser makes a decision to abuse. It is an ongoing technique to enforce control through the use of fear, and it is part of a pattern of abuse.

Myth #4:

Domestic violence only happens in poor families.

Domestic violence occurs throughout all levels of society and in every racial, ethnic, and religious group. There is no evidence to suggest that any income level, occupation, social class, or culture is immune from domestic violence. Wealthy, educated professionals are just as prone to violence as anyone.

Myth #5:

Domestic violence is just an occasional slap or punch that isn't serious.

Victims are often seriously injured. Over 30% of the women seeking care in hospital emergency rooms are there because they have been injured by their domestic partners. Abused women are more likely to suffer miscarriages or to give birth prematurely.



Domestic Violence Myths



Myth #6

Drinking or drug abuse causes domestic violence.

Some abusers make alcohol and drugs an excuse for violent behavior. While there is a correlation between substance abuse and domestic violence, one does not cause the other. However, substance abuse does lower inhibitions and may increase the frequency and severity of the abuse.

Myth #7:

The victim can always walk away from the relationship.

Victims believe that they do not have anyplace to go where they will be safe from the abuser. The abuser often knows the victim's friends and family members and can find a victim who leaves. It takes money, a support network, and time for planning to ensure that a victim can escape.

Myth #8:

If the abuser is truly sorry and promises to reform, the abuse is going to stop.

Remorse and begging for forgiveness are manipulative methods used by abusers to control their victims. Abusers rarely stop abusing; in fact, the abuse will almost always get worse as time goes on.

Myth #9:

If the violent episodes don't happen very often, the situation is not that serious.

Even if the violence doesn't happen often, the threat of it remains a terrorizing means of control. No matter how far apart the violent episodes are, each one is a reminder of the one that happened before and creates fear of the one that will happen in the future.

Myth #10:

Victims have the types of personalities that seek out and encourage abuse.

A number of studies have determined that there is no set of personality traits that describe victims of domestic violence. It is the abuser who is responsible for the abuse, not the victim.



Who are the Victims?

Statistically, Most Victims Are Women

- ◆ 85-95% of all domestic violence victims are women who are abused by their husbands or boyfriends.
- ◆ Teenaged, pregnant and disabled women are especially at risk.
- ◆ Even though most victims are women, men can be victims, too.

Children Can Be Direct Or Indirect Victims

- ◆ They may be abused themselves.
- ◆ They may be forced to see their parent abused in front of them.
- ◆ The abuser may use threats to harm them as a means of controlling the victim.
- ◆ They grow up seeing abuse as the natural way for domestic partners to relate to each other.
- ◆ They grow up in an insecure environment filled with tension and violence.

Teenagers Experience Dating Violence

- ◆ Teenagers are just as vulnerable to relationship violence and it is just as dangerous.
- ◆ Teenagers may not seek help because they distrust adults.



Domestic Violence Can Also Occur In Gay and Lesbian Households

- ◆ Gay and lesbian relationships are not immune to the pattern of abusive and coercive behaviors that constitute domestic violence.
- ◆ Victims may not seek help because they don't believe that help is available for same sex domestic abuse or because they fear they will be mistreated because of their sexual orientation.

The Elderly And People With Disabilities Can Be Victims

- ◆ They may be abused by their spouses or partners, adult children or caretakers.
- ◆ They may be physically unable to defend themselves or escape from the abuse.
- ◆ They may be physically or mentally unable to report the abuse to anyone.

Anyone Can Be A Victim

- ◆ Studies have found no characteristic link between personality type and being a victim.
- ◆ Victims can not stop the abuse by simply changing how they behave.
- ◆ Everyone deserves to be safe from domestic violence.

Abusers Typically:

- ◆ Deny that the abuse has occurred or make light of a violent episode.
- ◆ Blame the victim, other people or outside events for the violent attack.

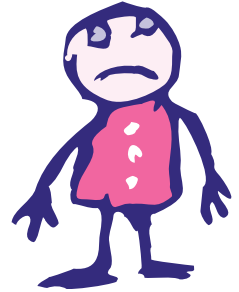
Abusers Don't Act Because They Are "Out of Control"

- ◆ Abusers choose to respond to a situation violently. They are making a decision to behave in a violent manner.
- ◆ They know what they're doing and what they want from their victims.
- ◆ They are not acting purely out of anger.
- ◆ They are not only reacting to stress.
- ◆ They are not helplessly under the control of drugs and alcohol.



Abuse Is A Learned Behavior

- ◆ It is not a "natural" reaction to an outside event.
- ◆ It is not "normal" to behave in a violent manner within a personal relationship.
- ◆ It may be learned from seeing abuse used as a successful tactic of control - often in the home in which the abuser grew up.
- ◆ It is reinforced when abusers are not arrested or prosecuted or otherwise held responsible for their acts.

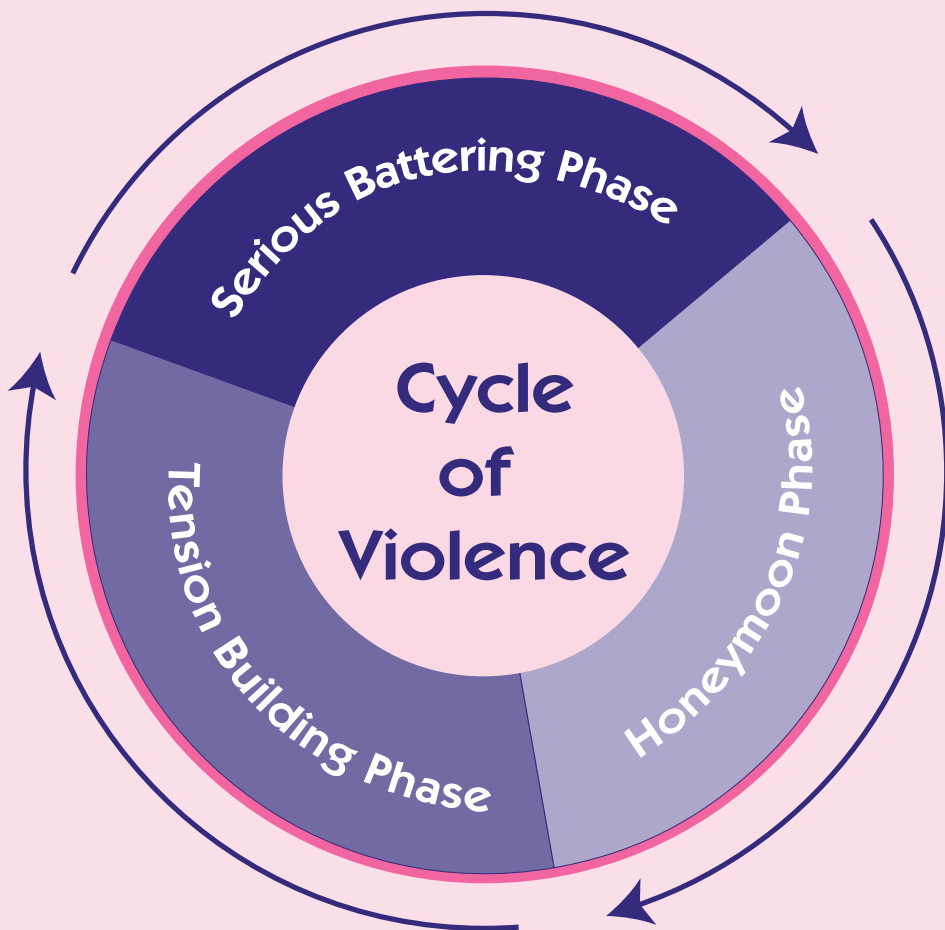


Abusers May Even:

- ◆ Express remorse and beg for forgiveness with seemingly loving gestures.
- ◆ Be hard workers and good providers.
- ◆ Be witty, charming, attractive and intelligent.
- ◆ At times, be loving parents.

Who are the Abusers?

Breaking the Cycle of Violence



Honeymoon Phase



This is where the relationship begins. Violent relationships may begin very romantically. They are quick, intense and seductive. The victim frequently looks back at this happy, loving time, hoping that the abuse will end and that the relationship will be like it was at the beginning. This phase is what perpetuates the relationship.

After violence occurs, this is a period of apologies, gifts, and promises that the abuse will never occur again and that the abuser will change. Both the victim and the abuser may minimize and rationalize the behavior and the seriousness of injuries. This can also be a time of renewed courtship, romance and sexual intimacy.

Tension-Building Phase

The tension-building phase may last a week, months, or even years. However, once the cycle of violence begins, it will usually occur more frequently. The tension-building phase is characterized by increased emotional abuse and a feeling of threat or intimidation. It may include minor physical abuse like slapping or pushing. Victims feel tense and afraid and often

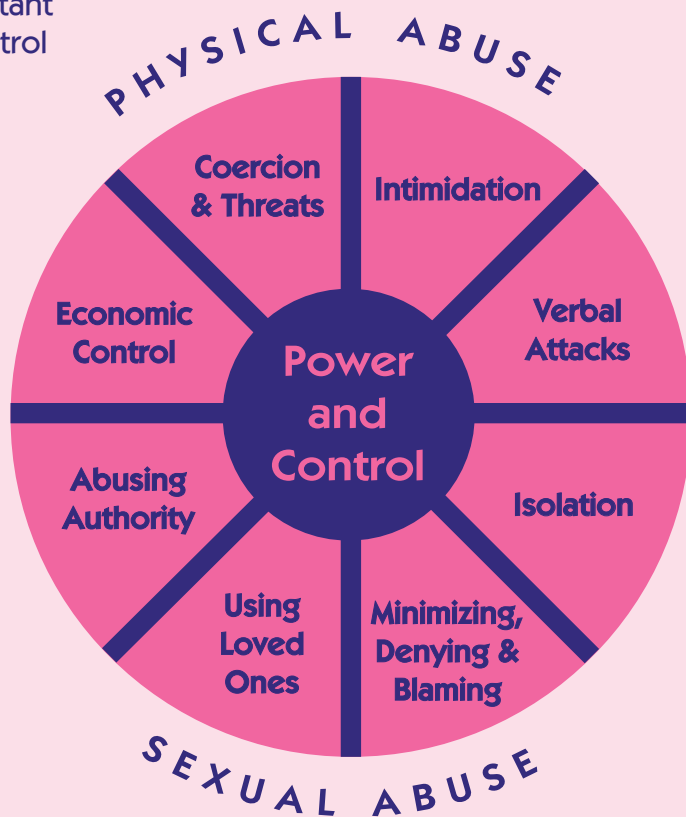
describe it as “walking on eggshells.” Victims learn to recognize these signs and may try to avoid or deflect the abuser’s anger by becoming more compliant. Sometimes, they may even provoke the abuser in order to break the tension and get the abuse over with.

Serious Battering Phase

This phase is characterized by a violent episode that may involve physical and/or sexual abuse, property destruction, and heightened emotional abuse. Children and pets may also become victims. Initially, minimal levels of violence may be sufficient to frighten the victim. As time goes on, the abuser will usually use more severe forms of abuse to maintain control. In some instances, other methods of exercising power and control are so effective that physical abuse is unnecessary. In relationships where there is no physical abuse, victims may believe that they are not in abusive relationships.

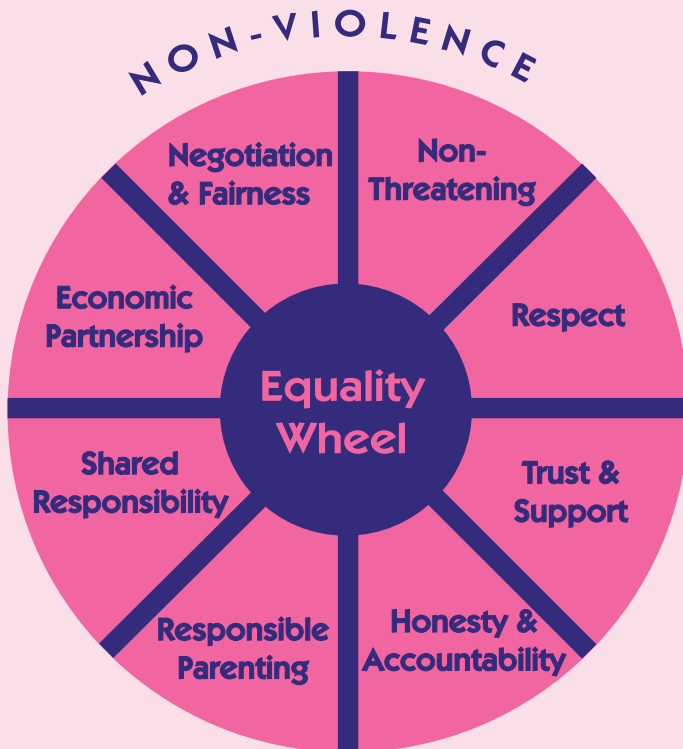
The Power and Control Wheel

The **Power and Control Wheel** links the different behaviors that together form a pattern of violence. It shows how each behavior is an important part in the overall effort to control someone.



The Equality Wheel

The **Equality Wheel** offers a view of a relationship that is based on equality and non-violence. Use this chart to compare the characteristics of a non-violent relationship to those of an abusive relationship in the **Power and Control Wheel**.



How to Help a Friend Who is a Domestic Violence Victim

1. Bring up the subject.

Don't be afraid to let your friend know your concerns. Say that you can see what's happening and that you want to help. Let your friend know that she/he is not alone.

2. Acknowledge that your friend is in a very difficult, scary situation.

Let your friend know that the abuse is not her/his fault. Encourage your friend to express any feelings of hurt or anger or humiliation. Don't be judgmental. Remind your friend that the abuser, not the victim, is responsible for the abuse. Remember that it may be difficult for your friend to talk about it with you.

3. Don't buy into your friend's denial.

If your friend refuses to acknowledge that she/he is in a dangerous situation, let your friend know that you believe it, and that you are concerned about safety.

4. Respect your friend's right to make decisions.

Let your friend find her/his own way to decisions. Don't start with what you think your friend should do or insist on following your plan.

5. Discuss this booklet with your friend.

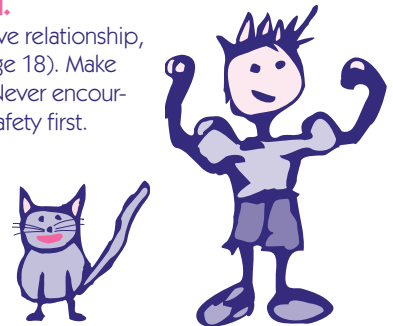
Help your friend identify the abusive behavior. Go over the Power and Control and Equality wheels. Talk about domestic violence programs and the services they offer. Give your friend information about the local domestic violence program.

6. Go with your friend.

Accompany your friend to medical care. If your friend is going to the police, to court, or to see a lawyer, offer to go along. Let your friend do the talking.

7. Plan safe strategies with your friend.

If your friend is contemplating leaving an abusive relationship, help to develop a Personal Safety Plan (See Page 18). Make sure your friend is comfortable with the plan. Never encourage a friend to follow a plan that doesn't put safety first.



If you are a domestic violence victim, let the people who care about you help you.

1. Confide in someone you trust.

If you have a friend or relative who cares about your safety, tell them about the abuse. Sharing a burden with someone makes it lighter. If you've left your abusive relationship and are feeling lonely and tempted to return, talk it out with a friend who knows the situation.

2. Don't let others talk you into taking action that doesn't feel right to you.

You are the only one who knows if you're ready to leave your relationship, go to the police, or seek emergency shelter. Make your own decisions, based on your own comfort level.

3. Leave an "emergency kit" with a friend.

This could include extra money, a set of car keys, a change of clothes and copies of important documents (driver's license, birth certificates, social security card, health insurance records, documentation of abuse) that may come in handy in an emergency. Think of what you might need if you have to leave your home in a hurry.

4. Ask a friend to accompany you to important appointments.

If you have medical appointments, are going to the police, to court, or to see a lawyer, take a friend along for moral support.

5. Discuss this booklet with a friend.

Go over the Power and Control and Equality wheels. Discuss the types of abuse you are experiencing. Discuss your emergency plans.

6. Make sure a friend knows about your Personal Safety Plan.

Start making your own Personal Safety Plan (See Page 18). Go over it with a friend and give that friend a copy of the plan.

How to Let Your Friends Help You

Safety Measures While You're in an Abusive Relationship



If you are living with a person who is abusing you, here are some things you can do to ensure your and your children's safety.

- 1.** Have important phone numbers memorized - friends and relatives whom you can call in an emergency. Discuss safety planning with your children. If your children are old enough, teach them important phone numbers, including when and how to dial 911.
- 2.** Keep this booklet in a safe place - where your abuser won't find it, but where you can get it when you need to review it.
- 3.** Keep change for pay phones, a pre-paid calling card, or a charged cell phone with you at all times.
- 4.** If you can, open your own bank account.
- 5.** Stay in touch with friends. Get to know your neighbors. Resist any temptation to cut yourself off from people - even if you feel that they don't understand or you just want to be left alone.
- 6.** Rehearse your escape plan until you know it by heart.
- 7.** Leave a set of car keys, extra money, a change of clothes and copies of the following documents in a safe place, or with a trusted friend or relative.
 - ◆ Your/your children's birth certificates
 - ◆ Your social security card
 - ◆ Your children's school and medical records
 - ◆ Bank books
 - ◆ Welfare identification
 - ◆ Passports or green cards
 - ◆ Lease agreements or mortgage payment books
 - ◆ Insurance papers
 - ◆ Important addresses and telephone numbers
 - ◆ Extra prescription medication
 - ◆ Any other important documents
 - ◆ Evidence of the abuse (photos, journals, medical records, police reports)



Safety After You Have Left the Relationship

If you are no longer living with the abuser, here are some things you can do to enhance your and your children's safety.

- 1.** Change the locks - if you're still in your home and the abuser is the one who has left.
- 2.** Install as many security features as possible in your home. These might include metal doors and gates, security alarm system, smoke detectors and outside lights or motion detector lights.
- 3.** Inform neighbors that your former partner is not welcome on the premises. Ask them to call the police if they see that person loitering about your property or watching your home.
- 4.** Make sure the people who care for your children are very clear about who does and who does not have permission to pick up your children.
- 5.** Obtain a civil protection order or a peace order. Keep it near you at all times, and make sure friends and neighbors have copies to show the police.
- 6.** Let your co-workers know about the situation, especially if your former partner is likely to come to your workplace. Ask them to warn you if they observe that person around.
- 7.** Avoid the stores, banks, and businesses you used when you were living with the abuser.
- 8.** Get counseling. Attend workshops. Join support groups. Do whatever it takes to form a supportive network that will be there when you need it.

Your Personal Safety Plan



These pages will help you plan for your safety. If you don't have some of this information, now is the time to get it. Keep this information in a safe and private place where your abuser cannot find it (for example, a friend's house, your workplace, a locked trunk or safe).

1. Important phone numbers:

Police: **911** or _____

Maryland Domestic Violence Helpline: **1-800-MD-HELPS (634-3577)**

Local domestic violence program and hotline number: _____

Closest District Court (to obtain a petition for protection): _____

My attorney: _____

My doctor: _____

Other: _____

2. I can call these friends or relatives in an emergency:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

3. These neighbors will call the police if they hear me being abused:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

4. I can go to these places if I have to leave my home in a hurry:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

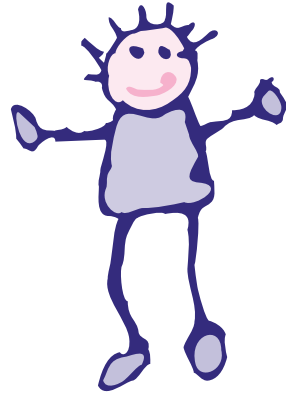
Address: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

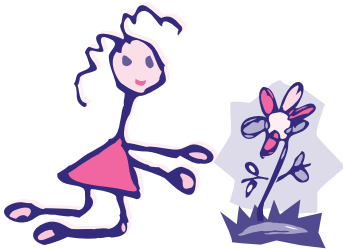
5. I have given the items below to a friend for safekeeping:

- My birth certificate
- My children's birth certificates
- My social security card
- My children's school records
- My children's medical records
- Bank books
- Welfare identification
- My passport or green card
- My children's passports or green cards
- My lease agreement or mortgage payment book
- Insurance papers
- Extra prescription medications
- Important addresses and telephone numbers
- Evidence of the abuse
- Other: _____
- Other: _____



6. I have put the following in a safe place or given to a friend for safekeeping:

- An extra set of car keys
- Some extra money
- An extra change of clothes for me and my children
- Other: _____
- Other: _____



Domestic Violence Programs in Maryland

ALLEGANY COUNTY

Hotline 301-759-9244 • TTY 301-759-9244

Family Crisis Resource Center • 301-759-9246

ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY

Hotline 410-222-6800

YWCA Domestic Violence Services

410-626-7800 (Annapolis) • 410-974-0084 (Baltimore)

BALTIMORE CITY

Hotline 410-889-7884 • TTY 410-889-0047

House of Ruth Maryland • 410-889-0840

Hotline 410-828-6390

TurnAround • 410-837-7000

BALTIMORE COUNTY

Hotline 410-828-6390

Family and Children's Services of Central Maryland

410-281-1334

Family Crisis Center of Baltimore County, Inc.

410-285-4357 • 410-285-7496 (Shelter)

TurnAround • 410-377-8111

CALVERT COUNTY

Hotline 410-535-1121 • Metro Hotline 301-855-1075

Crisis Intervention Center

CARROLL COUNTY

Hotline 410-857-0077

Family and Children's Services of Central Maryland

410-876-1233

CAROLINE, KENT, DORCHESTER, QUEEN ANNE'S, AND TALBOT COUNTIES

Hotline 1-800-927-4673

Mid-Shore Council on Family Violence • 410-479-1149

CECIL COUNTY

Hotline 410-996-0333

Cecil Co. Domestic Violence / Rape Crisis Center

CHARLES COUNTY

Hotline 301-645-3336 • Metro Hotline 301-843-1110

Center for Abused Persons • 301-645-8994

FREDERICK COUNTY

Hotline 301-662-8800 • TTY 301-662-1565

Heartly House

GARRETT COUNTY

Hotline 301-334-9000

The Dove Center • Oakland • 301-334-6255

The Dove Center • Grantsville • 301-895-4300

HARFORD COUNTY

Hotline 410-836-8430

Sexual Assault / Spouse Abuse Resource Center

410-836-8431 • 410-879-3486 (Baltimore)

HOWARD COUNTY

Hotline 410-997-2272 / 800-752-0191

Domestic Violence Center • 410-997-0304

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Hotline 240-777-4195 (days) • TTY 240-777-4850

240-777-4673 (evenings & weekends)

Abused Persons Program • 240-777-4210

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

Hotline 1-866-382-7474

Family Crisis Center, Inc. • 301-779-2100

House of Ruth Maryland (Legal and Counseling Services)

240-450-3270

ST. MARY'S COUNTY

Hotline 301-863-6661

Walden / Sierra, Inc. • 301-863-6677

Southern Maryland Center for Family Advocacy

301-373-4141 (Legal Services)

SOMERSET, WICOMICO & WORCESTER COUNTIES

Hotline 410-749-4357 • 410-641-4357

Life Crisis Center • 410-749-0771

WASHINGTON COUNTY

Hotline 301-739-8975 • TTY 301-739-1012

Citizens Assisting and Sheltering the Abused (CASA)

301-739-4990

SPECIALIZED PROGRAMS

Adelante Familia (Hispanic/Latina-Baltimore City/County)

410-732-2176 • Hotline 443-315-8673

CHANA (Jewish)

Hotline 1-800-991-0023

Asian/Pacific Islander DV Resource Project

202-464-4477



National Information Centers

National Domestic Violence Hotline

1-800-799- SAFE (7233) • 1-800-787-3224 (TTY for the Hearing Impaired)

Additional information about domestic violence is available from these sources:

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence

1120 Lincoln Street, Suite 1603 • Denver, CO 80203
303-839-1852 • www.ncadv.org

National Network to End Domestic Violence

2001 S Street, NW, Suite 400 • Washington, DC 20007
202-543-5566 • www.nnedv.org

National Resource Center on Domestic Violence

6400 Flank Drive, Suite 1300 • Harrisburg, PA 17112
1-800-537-2238 • www.nrcdv.org

Family Violence Prevention Fund

383 Rhode Island Street, Suite 304 • San Francisco, CA 94103-5133
415-252-8900 • www.endabuse.org

National Clearinghouse for the Defense of Battered Women

125 South 9th Street, Suite 302 • Philadelphia, PA 19107
215-351-0010 • www.ncdbw.org

ABA Commission on Domestic Violence

American Bar Association
740 15th Street, NW • Washington, DC 20005-1009
202-662-1000 • www.abanet.org





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The MNADV is a private, not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization.

6911 Laurel Bowie Road, Suite 309 • Bowie, Maryland 20715

TEL: 301-352-4574 • FAX: 301-809-0422 • E-MAIL: info@mnadv.org • WEBSITE: www.mnadv.org

1-800-MD HELPS / 1-800-634-3577
(Statewide Helpline)