



**It shouldn't
hurt to go home**

Domestic Violence Hotlines in Maryland

Call the domestic violence program in your county to access a 24-hour hotline, emergency shelter, counseling, legal information, and referrals to other services.

ALLEGANY COUNTY

Family Crisis Resource Center
301.759.9244

Text Message (SMS) Support Line:
301.970.4242

ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY

YWCA Domestic Violence Services
410-222-6800

BALTIMORE CITY

House of Ruth Maryland 410-889-7884
TTY 410-889-0047

TurnAround 443-279-0379

Crisis Text Line 410-498-5956

BALTIMORE COUNTY

County-wide Hotline 410-828-6390

Family and Children's Services of
Central Maryland 443-414-6467

Family Crisis Center of Baltimore
County, Inc. (410) 828-6390
TurnAround (410) 837-7000

CALVERT COUNTY

Calvert Center for Change
410-535-1121 OR 301-855-1075

CARROLL COUNTY

Springboard Community Services
(443)-865-8031

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

Mid-Shore Council on Family Violence
1-800-927-4673

CECIL COUNTY

The Bridge 410-996-0333

CHARLES COUNTY

Center for Abused Persons 301-645-3336

FREDERICK COUNTY

Heartly House 301-662-8800
TTY 301-662-1565

GARRETT COUNTY

The Dove Center 301-334-9000

HARFORD COUNTY

SARC 410-836-8430

HOWARD COUNTY

HopeWorks of Howard County, Inc.
410-997-2272

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Abused Persons Program 240-777-4195
TTY 240-777-4815

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

Community Crisis Services, Inc.
301-731-1203

House of Ruth Maryland (Legal and
Counseling Services) 240-450-3270

ST. MARY'S COUNTY

Southern Maryland Center for Family
Advocacy 301-373-4141
Helpline 240-925-0084

SOMERSET, WICOMICO & WORCESTER COUNTIES

Life Crisis Center 410-749-4357

WASHINGTON COUNTY

CASA (Citizens Assisting and Sheltering
the Abused) 301-739-8975
TTY 301-739-1012

SPECIALIZED PROGRAMS

Adelante Familia at House of Ruth
Maryland 410-889-7884

Ashiyanaa 1.888.417.2742

Asian/Pacific Islander DV Resource Project
202-833-2233

CHANA 410-234-0030

ElderSAFE Center, Charles E. Smith Life
Communities 301-770-8494

Jewish Coalition Against Domestic
Violence 1.877.885.2232

SAFE: Stop Abuse of Elders at CHANA
410-843-7571

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The Domestic Violence Victim's Handbook

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You're not alone

If you are experiencing domestic violence, it's not your fault. You don't deserve to be abused.

There is help.

Domestic violence is a pattern of coercive behavior in which one person (usually an intimate partner) dominates and controls someone through physical, psychological, emotional, verbal, sexual, and/or economic abuse.

FACTS

- **1 in 5 women** experienced completed or attempted rape during her lifetime.
- **1 in 14 men** was made to penetrate someone (completed or attempted) during his lifetime.¹
- **1 in 6 women and 1 in 17 men** have been victims of stalking at some point in their lifetime, during which they felt very fearful or believed that they or someone close to them would be harmed or killed.¹
- **1 in 15 children** are exposed to intimate partner violence each year, and 90% of these children are eyewitnesses to this violence.²

What is Domestic Violence?

Domestic violence can be much more than physical abuse. It often includes many types of controlling behaviors. Here are some forms of domestic violence:

PHYSICAL ABUSE

- Hitting
- Slapping
- Kicking
- Choking
- Pushing
- Punching
- Beating

VERBAL ABUSE

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

SEXUAL ABUSE

- Forcing sex
- Demanding sexual acts
- Degrading treatment

ISOLATION

- Making it hard to see friends and relatives
- Monitoring phone calls
- Reading mail, texts, or messages

- Controlling daily activities
- Taking car keys
- Destroying passports or documents

COERCION

- Causing guilt
- Sulking
- Manipulating children and family members
- Always insisting on being right
- Making up impossible “rules”

HARASSMENT

- Following or stalking
- Public shaming
- Constantly checking up
- Refusing to leave when asked

ECONOMIC CONTROL

- Not paying bills
- Refusing to give money
- Not allowing: Going to school, work or learning a job skill
- Refusing to work and support the family

ABUSING TRUST

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

THREATS AND INTIMIDATION

- Threats to harm others
- Threats to harm 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 feelings, rights, opinions, and concerns

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
- Causing trouble



Myths about Domestic Violence

Here are ten common myths about domestic violence.

They are NOT true.

MYTH #1: Domestic violence does not affect many people.

TRUTH: 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.

TRUTH: 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. The abuser may use other forms of abuse to exert power and control over an intimate partner.

MYTH #3: Domestic violence is just a bad temper.

TRUTH: Domestic violence 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 certain families.

TRUTH: 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.

MYTH #5: Domestic violence is just an occasional slap or punch that isn't serious.

TRUTH: Victims are often seriously injured. Some, but not all, seek medical care for injuries and health conditions caused by domestic violence. Abused women are more likely to suffer miscarriages or to give birth prematurely.

MYTH #6: Drinking or drug abuse causes domestic violence.

TRUTH: Some abusers make alcohol and drugs an excuse for violent behavior. While there is a link between substance abuse and domestic violence, one does not cause the other. However, substance abuse can make the violence worse.

MYTH #7: The victim can always walk away from the relationship.

TRUTH: There are many reasons why someone cannot leave. It takes money, a support network, and time for planning to ensure that a victim can leave safely. Research shows when a survivor leaves an abusive relationship it is the most dangerous time.

MYTH #8: If the abuser promises to change, the abuse is going to stop.

TRUTH: Asking for forgiveness is a manipulative method used by abusers. Abusers rarely stop abusing without help; in fact, the abuse often continues.

MYTH #9: Only women experience domestic violence and only men are abusers.

TRUTH: In addition to men's violence against women, many other types of relationships are impacted. People in lesbian or gay relationships, people who identify as bisexual, and people who identify as transgender, non-binary or gender-queer may experience domestic violence. Women can be abusive to men and use similar tactics of abuse.

MYTH #10: Victims have the types of personalities that seek out and encourage abuse.

TRUTH: The abuser is responsible for the abuse, not the victim. Anyone can become a victim. There is nothing about a person that justifies abuse.

Who are the Victims?

ANYONE CAN BE A VICTIM

- Studies have found no characteristic link between personality type and experiencing domestic violence.
- Abuse cannot be stopped by changing how the person experiencing domestic violence behaves.
- Everyone deserves to be safe from domestic violence.

WOMEN

- Women are at high risk for being seriously injured or killed by a partner.
- Pregnant and postpartum women are especially at risk.
- Teen girls and young women are at high risk for dating violence.



TEENS AND YOUNG ADULTS

- Teenagers are just as vulnerable to relationship violence and it is just as dangerous.
- Teenagers may not seek help because they distrust adults.
- In college, 25% of young women and 7% of young men say they suffered unwanted sexual incidents, many of which were at the hands of a dating partner.⁴

CHILDREN

- They may be abused themselves.
- They may see their parent being abused.
- The abuser may threaten to harm the children.
- They grow up seeing abuse as normal. Witnessing abuse carries the same risk of harm to children's mental health and learning as being abused directly. Children who have witnessed DV experience far greater incidence of insomnia, bed wetting, verbal, motor, and cognitive issues, learning difficulties, self-harm, aggressive and antisocial behaviors, depression, and anxiety. There is also a link to adult experiences of DV: boys who witness DV in the home are more likely to become offenders, victims, or both, and girls are more likely to become victims.⁵

PEOPLE IN LGBTQ RELATIONSHIPS

- People in LGBTQ relationships experience domestic violence at about the same rates or higher compared to heterosexual individuals.
- People in LGBTQ relationships may not seek help because they don't believe that help is available or because they fear discrimination.

OLDER ADULTS AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

- Individuals who have disabilities are at high risk for abuse.
- 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.
- Men and women who have disabilities are at high risk for abuse.

Who are the Abusers?

ABUSERS AREN'T "OUT OF CONTROL"

- Abusers choose how to respond to a situation. They decide to behave in a violent manner.
- 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 LEARNED

- It is not "natural."
- It is not "normal."
- It is learned, sometimes from the home where the abuser grew up.

ABUSERS MAY

- Say they are sorry and act loving.
- Be hard workers and good providers.
- Be witty, charming, attractive, and intelligent.
- At times, be loving parents.

Impact of domestic violence

Domestic violence is often traumatizing. The word “trauma” is used to describe painful or disrupting experiences that overwhelm someone’s ability to deal with certain situations or everyday life.

Survivors of trauma, including domestic violence, may go into “survival mode,” which creates three options:

1. **FIGHT:** You may feel angry about what your partner did to you.
2. **FLIGHT:** You may feel anxious or fearful about what has happened and what might happen.
3. **FREEZE:** You may feel emotionally numb, unable to express yourself, or stuck.
4. **APPEASE:** You consistently abandon your own needs to serve others to avoid conflict, criticism, or disapproval.

All of these reactions to trauma are normal, common, and understandable. Something bad and scary happened to you.

REMEMBER:

You did not cause this to happen.

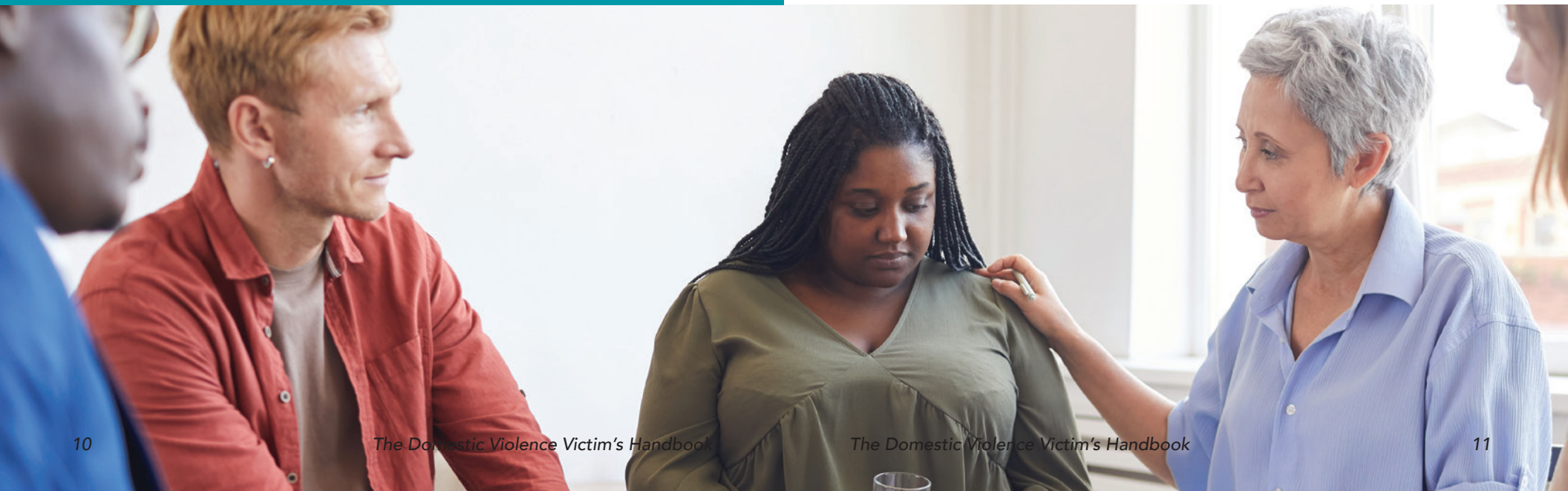
Signs of high-danger situations

Some forms of domestic violence are especially dangerous and life-threatening. Some victims are even killed by their partner. Most victims who were killed by their partner were physically or emotionally abused before they were killed. Leaving can be a dangerous time. Safety planning is essential.

When certain risk factors are present in a relationship, there is a greater chance that a victim will be killed.⁶

Some risk factors, or “lethality factors,” to watch for include:

- Use or threats with a weapon
- Threats to kill
- Access to a gun
- Strangulation (choking)
- Jealous and controlling behavior
- Abuser’s unemployment
- Suicide attempts by the abuser
- Stalking and harassment



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 of the overall effort to control someone.

All forms of abuse, including emotional and verbal, are serious and harmful. Survivors may experience one or more forms of abuse.



The Equality Wheel

The **Equality Wheel** offers a view of a healthy 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.



Stalking and Technology

Many people report that their partner follows or monitors them, in person or online. **1 in 6 women and 1 in 17 men were victims of stalking** at some point in their lifetime.¹

Here are some stalking behaviors:

- Watching or following you
- Repeated threatening calls or unwanted messages
- Monitoring your social networking
- Posting unwanted photos or videos of you online
- Sending unwanted gifts
- Breaking into your home or destroying your property
- Using cameras in your home or spyware on your computer or phone

Options to consider if you are being stalked:

- **Documentation:** by keeping a log, taking photos, and/or by saving items or messages.
- Find a **safer computer or mobile device** that your partner can't access to find help and resources.
- Check your **cell phone** for suspicious activity or apps and turn off GPS and Bluetooth when not in use.
- See what personal information is on the **internet** about you and try to get it taken down.
- Change your usernames, passwords, and security questions to your **online accounts** if your partner knows or could guess them.
- Check your privacy settings on **social media accounts** and watch what your friends and family post, too.



How to Help a Friend

Express your concern. Acknowledge that your friend is in a very difficult, scary situation. Let your friend know that the abuse is not their fault. Let your friend know that you believe them and that you are concerned about their safety. Encourage your friend to express their feelings and get help. Keep in mind that the survivor is the expert of their situation, what we think might be best for them might not match what they think.

Remember that it may be difficult for your friend to talk about it.

- Respect your friend's right to make decisions.
- Discuss this booklet with your friend.
- Offer to go with your friend when they seek help.
- Plan safe strategies with your friend.

How your Friends can Help

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

- Confide in someone you trust.
- Only take steps that feel right to you.
- Discuss this booklet with someone you trust.
- Leave an "emergency kit" with a friend.
- Ask a friend to go with you when you seek help.
- Make sure someone you trust knows your plan to stay safe (see page 18).
- The survivor is the expert of their situation. What we think might be best for them might not match what they think.



Your Options

It is normal to have a hard time deciding what to do when you're in an abusive relationship.

You are not alone. There is help.

Here are some options and issues you can consider:

STAYING IN THE RELATIONSHIP

If you stay, you can find support and safety. If you're called names, how can you take care for yourself emotionally? What friends can you trust? Is there a safe place to stay in case you need to leave for a few days if it gets dangerous or if you need a break?

PLANNING TO LEAVE

If you might want to leave, it takes planning. How can you get money? Will you be safe at home? When can you leave? Will you take legal action? Need an attorney? How will your partner react? What might prevent you from leaving safely? With time and support, you can make a plan to leave.

LEAVING THE RELATIONSHIP

If you've decided to leave, it can be a big life change that is scary if you're in danger. Will you have to move or change jobs so you can't be found? Stop talking to certain friends? Take a break from social media? Call the police or get a protective order? A new life is possible, even if it is hard to imagine.

SUPPORT AND SAFETY PLANNING

No matter what you decide, you can build your support system and find ways to be safer. Inside the front cover is a list of the local domestic violence hotline numbers. The next two pages will help get you started.

Support Planning

Support Needed

SURVIVORS
list supports they need

Support Available

FRIENDS & FAMILY
list what they can offer

Help Needed	Y/N/M	Needs	Y/N/M	Help Offered
Take care of Fido when I move out of my apartment	Y	Pet sitting/pet care	Y	Up to 3 days/3nights
		Listening		
		Provide a safe place to stay overnight		
Need ride to work	Y	Provide rides	Y	Monday, Wednesday, Friday
		Provide money		
		Provide childcare/watch children		
		Store belongings, important items, money, paperwork		
		Provide money		

KEY

YES: I am in need of this support/available to provide this support.

NO: I am not in need of this support/not available to provide this support.

MAYBE: I may want this support/be available to provide this support under certain conditions.

Safety Planning

This page will help collect your thoughts and think through some resources that are available to you.

These are people and places where you can go for immediate help.

These are the numbers I can call if I need help:

Call 911

Friend or family member:

Domestic violence hotline
(see inside cover): _____

Other organization:

Other person:

These are the places I can go if I have to leave in a hurry:

Friend or family member:

Domestic violence shelter
(see hotline above)

Safe public places (day/night,
e.g. police station, hospital,
church, 24-hour restaurant):

The following items can be stored in a safe place or given to a trusted person. Consider which items are needed for yourself and your children.

- ☐ Cell phone and charger (if safe)
- ☐ Photo IDs, birth certificates, and social security cards
- ☐ Public benefits identification cards
- ☐ Passports or immigration papers
- ☐ Proof of insurance (health, home, car)
- ☐ Rent or mortgage payment records
- ☐ Bank account records and credit/debit cards
- ☐ Cash
- ☐ Keys
- ☐ Extra clothes
- ☐ Extra medication
- ☐ Irreplaceable items (photos, jewelry, toy)
- ☐ Court orders (protective or custody)
- ☐ Other documents: _____
- ☐ Other items: _____

Our Mission/Our Vision



OUR MISSION

The Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV) is the state domestic violence coalition that brings together victim service providers, allied professionals, and concerned individuals for the common purpose of reducing intimate partner and family violence and its harmful effects on our citizens. The Network accomplishes this goal by providing education, training, resources, and advocacy to advance victim safety and abuser accountability.

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

OUR VISION

One day Maryland will be a state where families and relationships thrive on mutual trust and respect and where there is no place for violence.

FOOTNOTES

1. *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2015 Data Brief – Updated Release-NISVS, 2018. NOTE: This categorization of violence includes contact sexual violence, physical violence, stalking, and psychological aggression by an intimate partner.*
2. NCADV
3. *Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention National Survey of Children's Exposure to Violence– OJJDP, 2011*
4. *Brown, B., and Bzostek, S. (2003, August). Violence in the lives of children. Crosscurrents, 1. Bethesda, MD: Child Trends. Retrieved from <http://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2003/01/2003-15ViolenceCh....>*
5. *Nicolaidis et al, 2003*

