



# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

## TYPES OF ABUSE

During pregnancy, it's important for your physical and mental health that you keep yourself safe from abuse. If you are being abused in your relationship, remember that abuse is **never** your fault.

### *So what is partner abuse?*

There are many types of abuse, but the most common are physical, emotional or

sexual mistreatment by a partner.

◇ Physical, which can involve:

- Pushing
- Slapping
- Punching
- Kicking
- Using a weapon
- Using force that causes pain or injury

◇ Emotional, which can involve:

- Threats of harm to you or your family members, friends, or possessions
- Depriving you of money, sleep, or affection
- Harassing you at work or at home

- Insulting or verbally abusing you
- Using any type of behavior to cause you emotional pain
- ◇ Sexual mistreatment, which happens if you feel forced to perform sexual acts that you have not consented to



*What does abuse look like?*

Sometimes you can be unsure of when something is abuse. Some warning signs and common characteristics of abusers include:

- ◇ Having a poor self-image
- ◇ Inability to control their own lives
- ◇ Acting “bossy” and controlling
- ◇ Controlling your access to money
- ◇ Have witnessed abuse as children or were abused themselves
- ◇ Viewing violence as a natural part of family life
- ◇ Abusing alcohol or other drugs, and even using it as an excuse for

# abuse

- ◇ Not communicating well and having trouble expressing feelings
- ◇ Feeling intense jealousy
- ◇ Having a violent temper
- ◇ Ignoring or mocking your needs and ideas



## BEING PRO-ACTIVE

If don't think your situation is abusive, but are worried that it might lead to abuse in the future, you can play a part in preventing partner abuse at home by:

- ◇ Setting an example for your children by following a “no violence” rule
- ◇ Resolving problems by talking things over in an understanding, empathetic way
- ◇ Getting help if you and your partner can't resolve problems

## THE CYCLE OF ABUSE

The cycle of abuse follows a 3-stage pattern for many couples:

1. *Tension building*: This is a time of minor conflicts and, possibly, some physical abuse. This stage may last from a few hours to many months. The victim is aware of the building tension and tries to please and humor the abuser.
2. *A major episode of violence*: This may be triggered by a small quarrel. Once an attack starts, there's usually little the victim can do to stop it. Apologizing or reasoning with the abuser seldom works.
3. *A period of remorse*: The abuser feels ashamed and guilty, promising it will never happen again. The abuser may be on best behavior for a while and treat the

victim with great kindness and generosity. But sooner or later, the cycle starts again. However, some abusers may never apologize or feel remorse. They may create an atmosphere of constant tension and abuse.

## TAKING ACTION

If you're in an abusive relationship, you may feel trapped. You may find it hard to leave due to fear of more violence or of isolation. You may also be financially dependent on your abuser and may find it difficult to come up with

*“Violence against Native women is NOT traditional”  
~National Indigenous Women's Center*



the funds to leave. You may have to choose between staying in the abusive relationship or leaving your children to your abuser. You may not believe it's right to leave your husband under any circumstances. You may hope that your abuser will change his ways.

Ask yourself the following questions to decide whether or not your abuser has changed and if your home is safe for you:

- ◇ Is he still jealous?
- ◇ Has he stopped being violent or threatening?
- ◇ Has he stopped criticizing?
- ◇ Am I still afraid when I'm with him?

- ◇ Can he be angry without yelling or hitting?
- ◇ Can I express anger toward him without being attacked?
- ◇ Can he hear and respect what I say?

## *What you can do if you are a victim of abuse?*

- ◇ Talk about the situation with someone who can help (a friend, relative, therapist, crisis center counselor, priest or minister, or other trained professional).
- ◇ Try to have as much control over money as you can. Having your own money can make it easier to

control some of the family income. Try to keep all property, including house and cars, in both your names.

- ◇ Make a list of your skills and strengths as a person. These skills are yours, and your abuser can't take them away from you. Find ways to use these skills and

*Asking for help is the first and biggest step to stopping the violence.*

strengths in your everyday tasks to find a sense of control. If possible, find a job that allows you to use your unique skills.

## IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

Make a safety plan if you are a victim of abuse so that you will be able to escape

under extreme circumstances.

- ◇ Think of a safe place you can go, and figure out how you will get there.
- ◇ Keep important items handy. You may want to store some of these things with a person you can trust.
  - Money
  - Clothes
  - An extra set of house and car keys
  - Needed medications
  - Important papers, such as a driver's license, birth certificates and medical records
  - Important telephone numbers
- ◇ Change your phone number, and ask everyone not to give out

your new number or address.

- ◇ Vary your routine (travel different routes to work, use different stores, etc.).
- ◇ If the abuser has left, change locks on all doors and make sure windows lock.

## *What should you do during an attack?*

- ◇ Get away if you can, or defend yourself as best you can.
- ◇ Call 911 if possible. Write down officer's names and badge numbers in case a record of the attack is needed.
- ◇ Leave the house and, if you have

children, take them with you.

- ◇ Seek medical help. Injuries may be more serious than they seem. Also, if you decide to press charges, having a record of the injuries can help.



## WHERE TO GET HELP

- ◇ *Disaster Distress Hotline:*

1-800-985-5990

- Administered by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration
- Offers support coping methods, and counseling, during, before, and after disasters

◇ *Native Youth Crisis Line:*  
1-877-209-1266

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (24/7)
- Has specific resources for Native American Youth
- Offers support, coping methods, and counseling, during, before, and after disasters.

◇ *Women's Circle: 605-698-4129*

- Domestic Violence Shelter in Sisseton
- 24/7 hotline is 888-200-4459

*No matter your obstacles,  
always remember that  
abuse is **never** your fault  
and that there are many  
people in the SWO  
community that can help*

◇ *Sisseton Police: 605-698-3932*

- Protects and serves the Sisseton community



- Keeps a sex offender registry, makes arrests, intervenes in cases of harm.

◇ *Roberts County Sheriff:*  
605-698-7667

- South Dakota State official

◇ *SWO Tribal Police:*  
605-698-7661

- Defends both the tribal and U.S. constitution

◇ *Women of Nations Eagle Shelter:*  
1-877-209-1266

- 24/7 crisis hotline for battered American Indian women
- Offers legal counsel support

◇ *Woodrow Wilson Keeble  
Healthcare Center (IHS):*  
605-698-7606

- Emergency service and psychological counseling

◇ *Coteau Des Prairies Clinic:*  
605-698-7681

- General health care, open 9-5pm Monday through Friday

◇ *Coteau Des Prairies Hospital:*  
605-698-7647

- General health care, open 9-5pm Monday through Friday
- Wide variety of services, including emergency room, OBG and gynecology, and

## fitness programs

◇ *SWO Child Protection Program:*  
605-698-3992

- Tribe-run program for protecting vulnerable children and keeping families intact

◇ *Volunteers of America-Family Crisis Intervention:*  
605-380-8023

- Prevention and early intervention program for South Dakota
- Diverts youth and family involvement in the Juvenile Justice System

◇ *Dakota Pride:* 605-698-3917

- Local resource for drug and substance abuse prevention, intervention, and recovery

◇ *National BIA Child Abuse Hotline:*

1-800-633-5166

- 24/7 hotline for information, intervention, social services, counseling, and referrals