

# Domestic Violence

## Did You Know?

- On average, nearly 20 people per minute are victims of physical violence by an intimate partner in the United States. <sup>1</sup>
- 1 in 3 women and 1 in 4 men have experienced [some form of] physical violence by an intimate partner within their lifetime. <sup>1</sup>
- Intimate partner violence accounts for 15% of all violent crime. <sup>2</sup>



## What is Domestic Violence?

Domestic violence is the willful intimidation, physical assault, battery, sexual assault, and/or other abusive behavior as part of a systematic pattern of power and control perpetrated by one intimate partner against another. It includes physical violence, sexual violence, threats, and emotional abuse. The frequency and severity of domestic violence can vary dramatically.

Domestic violence is an epidemic affecting individuals in every community, regardless of age, economic status, sexual orientation, gender, race, religion, or nationality.

Domestic violence can result in physical injury, psychological trauma, and in severe cases, even death.

## If Domestic Violence is Impacting You

If you are a victim of domestic violence you may blame your own behavior, rather than the violent actions of the abuser. You may try continually to alter your behavior and circumstances in order to please the abuser – believing that if you follow certain rules and make sure the abuser is happy – you will not be hurt. However, you need to know that violence perpetrated by abusers is often self-driven and depends little on your actions or words.

Abusive relationships are terrifying, but terminating a relationship with someone whom is hurting you can be even more terrifying. It is a myth that people don't leave violent relationships. Many leave an average of five to seven times before they are able to leave permanently. You may feel that you are in greater danger from your partner's abuse when you leave. Only you can decide what is best for you and your children. Whether you decide to remain with your abusive partner or leave, it is important for you to plan for your safety. Keeping yourself (and your children) safe is of the utmost importance; therefore it is imperative that you follow a comprehensive safety plan.

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## Cascade Centers Employee Assistance Program

Phone: 800-433-2320

Text: 503-980-1777

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## **How to Stay Safe**

- Contact your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) professional for confidential consultation, counseling, support, safety planning, and links to workplace and community resources.
- Plan a safe place to stay. Make sure that your “safe-place” is unknown to the person who is abusing you.
- Never disclose your whereabouts to your abuser.
- Get as many safety devices as possible. Especially a cellular phone and keep it with you at all times.
- Pack an “emergency bag” with things you will need for an extended stay, and keep it hidden, but ready to use in case you feel that your life is in danger, and need to leave at a moment’s notice.
- Seek legal help. There are laws that protect victims of domestic violence, and the courts will grant you a restraining order and special hearings to monitor your abuser’s compliance.
- Notify your supervisor and security about your situation, allow a neutral person to assess the risk for violence in the workplace, and submit a recent photograph of the abuser to security in the event of a confrontation at work.

## **The Employee Assistance Program Can Help**

It is not your fault that you are being abused. Nobody deserves to be assaulted, least of all by a partner who is supposed to be part of a caring relationship. People often blame themselves because that is what they are told by the abuser, but that is just their way of justifying what they are doing to you. You should always remember that being assaulted is wrong.

If you are currently experiencing or have experienced abuse in an intimate relationship, support is available. The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provides free, confidential services to both victims and survivors of domestic abuse. The EAP is committed to helping employees and their household members feel safe – in their homes, communities and workplaces.

Domestic violence can severely affect every aspect of a person’s life. Leaving may involve rearranging your whole life. It can also be dangerous if the abuser has threatened to kill a partner who leaves. Safety is a major concern of the EAP. The EAP will discuss safety concerns and the level of risk to an employee to help determine the best course of action.

The EAP is available to provide a variety of services to employees affected by domestic abuse, including:

- Initial and ongoing support
- Problem solving
- Safety planning assistance for home and work
- Referrals to community resources
- Knowledgeable referrals to community-based domestic violence service programs
- Support groups

All services are strictly confidential.

## **References:**

1. Black, M.C., Basile, K.C., Breiding, M.J., Smith, S.G., Walters, M.L., Merrick, M.T., Chen, J., & Stevens, M. (2011). The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2010 Summary Report. National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved from: [http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs\\_report2010-a.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs_report2010-a.pdf)
2. Truman, J. & Morgan, R. (2014). Nonfatal Domestic Violence, 2003-2012. U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics. Retrieved from: <http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/ndv0312.pdf>

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