

What Can I Do?

If you are the victim of violence...

- ❖ If you are considering leaving your abuser, make safety plans before you talk about separation. Begin to think about how you can plan your own safety and happiness. Waiting for abusers to change and trying harder to please them will not work.
- ❖ Try to keep enough money in a protected place to use when you need it to get to safety. Some victims find it best to go to a shelter where they can be safe before they tell the abuser that they are leaving.
- ❖ Find out what resources are available in your area for victims of partner abuse. A good place to start is your state or county department of social services. At a safe time, when the abuser is not around, call a local battered women's shelter or domestic violence hotline.
- ❖ If you think you are in immediate danger, you probably are. You are the expert at sensing when things are getting really bad. Flee at once to a safe location or call the police if you can. When police arrive ask, what legal protection is available to you, and use whatever you need to be sure you are safe.

If You Are A Friend Or Family Member...

- ❖ You can do something. Encourage the victim to get to safety and help keep that person safe. Do not accept excuses for violence from people you love.
- ❖ Call police, if the victim cannot. Sometimes this can help stop or reduce the violence.

The Victim Witness Assistance Program does not discriminate against individuals or group on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex or disability. If you believe you have been the target of discrimination, you have the right to file a civil rights complaint. Information on how to file a civil rights complaint can be found on the Office of Justice Programs website.

RESOURCES

National Resource Center on Domestic Violence 1.800.537.2238
Battered Women's Justice Project 1.800.903.0111
Health Resource Center on Domestic Violence 1.800.313.1310
Resource Center on Child Protection/Custody 1.800.527.3223
HUD Headquarters Employee Assistance Program 202.708.0523
National Domestic Violence Hotline 1.800.799.7233 or 1.800.787.3224

Office of the District Attorney Northern Judicial Circuit Victim Services Program

Breaking The Cycle



Of Domestic Violence

Northern Judicial Circuit Victim Services

Kristie Cross
Director

Kcross@nacga.org

706-795-6322 (Office)

706-795-3588 (Fax)

P.O. Box 452

Danielsville, GA 30633

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Characteristics of Safe and Healthy Relationships	Characteristics of Abusive Relationships
Partnerships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint decision making • Shared responsibilities 	Domination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Servant/Master
Economic Equality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freedom to decide issues of work, school, and money 	Economic Control <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deny job freedom/Withhold money
Emotional Honesty <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feel safe to admit and share fears and insecurities 	Emotional Manipulation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use jealousy, passion, stress and frustration to justify actions
Sexual Respect <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accept that “no” means “no” 	Sexual Abuse <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Force partner to do things against his/her will
Physical Safety <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Express self without violence 	Physical Abuse <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hit, choke, kick, punch, use weapons
Support, Trust <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen and understand 	Controlling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isolate partner from friends, loved ones
Respectful <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect right to differing feelings, friend and activities 	Intimidating <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making light of abuse: “you’re too sensitive”

Getting Help: Safety Planning



If you are still in the relationship:

1. Think of a safe place to go if an argument occurs- avoid rooms with no exits (bathroom) , or rooms with weapons (kitchen).
2. Think about and make a list of safe people to contact.
3. Keep change with you at all times
4. Memorize all important numbers
5. Establish a “code word or sign” so that family, friends, teachers or co-workers know when to call for help.
6. Think about what you will say to your partner if he/she becomes violent.
7. Remember you have the right to live without fear and violence.

If you have left the relationship:

1. Change your phone number.
2. Save and document all contacts, messages, injuries, or other incidents involving the batterer.
3. Change locks, if the batterer has a key.
4. Avoid staying alone.
5. Plan how to get away if confronted by an abusive partner.
6. If you have to meet your partner, do it in a public place.
7. If you have to meet your partner, do it in a public place.
8. Notify school and work contacts.
9. Call a shelter for battered women.

What is a Safety Plan?

Every individual in an abusive relationship needs a safety plan. Shelters and crisis counselors have been urging safety plans for years, police departments, victim services, hospitals, and courts have adopted this strategy. Safety plans should be individualized- for example, taking account of age, marital status, whether children are involved, geographic location, and resources available-but still contain common elements.

When creating a safety plan:

- **Think about all possible escape routes-** Doors, first-floor windows, elevators, stairwells. Rehearse if possible.
- **Choose a place to go.** To the home of a friend or relative, a motel or hotel, or a shelter- most importantly somewhere you will feel safe.
- **Pack a survival kit.** Money for cab fare, a change of clothes, extra house and car keys, birth certificates, passports, medications, and copies of prescriptions, insurance information, legal documents such as separation agreements and protection orders, Conceal it in the home or leave it with a trusted neighbor, friend, or relative.
- **Avoid arguments with the abuser in areas with potential weapons.** Kitchen, garage, or in small spaces without an outside door.
- **Know the telephone number of the domestic.** Contact it for information on resources and legal rights.
- **Review the safety plan monthly.**