

What I Can Do

If someone is hurting you or someone else, it's not your fault. It is also not your job to try to fix the situation or to protect others from the violence. The best thing you can do to help is to stay safe.

If something happens, do not try to intervene. Instead, you can:

- Go to a safe place, like your room, outside, a neighbor's or friend's house, a library, or school;
- Stay away from the kitchen and garage, where it's easier to get hurt;
- Avoid small rooms where you could get trapped (i.e., bathrooms or closets);
- Tell someone you trust - and keep telling until someone believes you.

If you think that you and others may need to leave suddenly, plan ahead.

- Keep a bag with extra clothes at a friend's house or at school.
- Keep an extra set of car keys somewhere that you can get to easily.
- Ask a friend or another trusted person if you can stay with them if necessary.
- Have a code word with the adult/parent that indicates when you should call the police, leave the house, etc.

If you are looking for information online, consider your safety when using technology. For example, if you think the abuser will check the search history on the home computer, use a computer at school, the library, or a friend's house. Be careful about sharing personal information online.

Phone Numbers to Remember

- **Police - 911**
- National Domestic Violence Hotline
1-800-799-SAFE (7233)
www.ndvh.org
- Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network
1-800-656-HOPE (4673)
www.rainn.org
- National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline
1-866-331-9474
www.loveisrespect.org
- Girls & Boys Town National Hotline
1-800-448-3000
www.boystown.org/national-hotline

Local Domestic Violence/ Sexual Assault Programs

Nebraska's network of domestic violence/sexual assault programs provide access to safety and shelter across the state. To locate the program nearest you, visit www.nebraskacoalition.org.

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VIOLENCE IN THE HOME



INFORMATION FOR TEENS



Nebraska Coalition to End
Sexual and Domestic Violence
www.nebraskacoalition.org
402-476-6256

Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is a pattern of behaviors used by one person in a relationship to maintain control over another. This can include:

- Isolating someone from family/friends;
- Calling someone names;
- Putting someone down;
- Making his/her partner do things that they don't want to do;
- Not allowing someone access to money, cars, or other resources;
- Using children and pets to get someone to do what they want; and
- Physically or sexually abusing someone.

The abusive person may include you in the abuse. For example, he/she may:

- Tell you to pick sides;
- Tell you to report on the person's activities;
- Tell you to keep secrets;
- Tell you to say mean things to the other person or to physically hurt them.

Sometimes teens and younger children are hurt in the situation as well. **If someone is hurting you or someone else, it is not your fault!**

It's also important to remember that the blame and responsibility for the abuse should be directed toward the abusive person and not the other person. **No one deserves to be abused.**

If someone is hurting you or someone else, it is not your fault!

How Does This Affect Me?

Many teens witness domestic violence by one of their parents or violence toward one of their parents by a boyfriend or girlfriend. Common reactions include:

- Fearing for the safety of self, parents, or siblings;
- Confusion about who to believe, trust, or support;
- Worrying that the abuse is your fault;
- Feeling protective over one or both parents and/or your siblings;
- Trying to prevent or interrupt fights;
- Worrying about what will happen if you are not home;
- Still feeling love for the abusive person;
- Feeling anger, hurt, fear, or betrayal by one or both parents;
- Feeling embarrassed by your family;
- Not inviting friends to your house or accepting rides home;
- Not telling your parents about school events; and
- Fearing that no one will believe you or that they will blame you.



It's okay to talk about what's happening. Talk to people you trust, like the non-abusive parent, teacher, youth pastor, friend, or neighbor.

Remember, most adult victims actively try to protect themselves and their children. Sometimes it's hard to know what is happening because your parent may not want to involve you. It's okay to ask them to talk to you about it.

Coping Strategies

Everyone deals with domestic violence differently. There is no right or wrong way. However, some strategies are less healthy than others.

Healthy strategies include:

- Talking to someone you trust;
- Writing in a journal;
- Focusing on school;
- Getting involved in school or community activities;
- Avoiding violence in other places (i.e., videogames, music, or movies); and
- Exercising.

Unhealthy strategies include:

- Running away;
- Getting into serious relationships quickly to escape your home life;
- Cutting yourself or other behaviors that jeopardize your physical health;
- Eating disorders; and
- Using alcohol or drugs.

If you think that your coping strategies are unhealthy, it may help to talk with someone like a school counselor or someone from a domestic violence/sexual assault program.

If you tell someone, they may need to share the information with police or child protective services. You can call a hotline and remain anonymous.

***Remember,
no one deserves to be abused.***