

Domestic Violence Fact Sheet

General

How to Help a Friend:

1. Make sure your friend knows that it is not their fault.
 - Violence is a behavioral choice made by the batterer to assume or take control of any given situation.
 - Regardless of the behavior of the victim, a violent reaction on the part of the batterer is still a controlled response/choice.
 - Batterers use any excuse to condone their behavior (stress, drugs/alcohol, victim's behavior, etc.).
2. Help the victim to see the reality of the situation rather than buying into her minimizations or denial.
 - Sometimes victims will minimize/deny the violent behavior or create excuses for the batterer in an attempt to tolerate the situation.
 - Typically victims will not know of their options so minimizing/denial are a coping mechanism.
3. Understand that a victim can love a person that is hurting them.
 - The victim typically still cares for the batterer. Their only wish is for the abuse to stop.
 - Victims also try to modify who they are and their behavior in an attempt to appease the batterer so the abuse will stop. Typically, for the batterer, this only serves to validate the abusive behavior – it works to control the victim.
4. Understand that leaving a batterer is the most dangerous time.
 - Many people try to help a victim by telling them to just leave. The reality is not that simple as this is the most dangerous time for stalking and homicide because the batterer feels out of control.
 - Recommend safety measures for when they are living in a violent home and for when/if the victim does want to leave.
 - Typically, the batterer has threatened the victim if she tries to leave with things like immigration issues, DFACS reporting, financial ruin, embarrassment, legal hassles, and the safety of family.
5. There are economic realities behind a decision to stay in an abusive home.
 - The victim may believe she has no choice.
 - Many victims/children are financially dependant on the batterer, typically by the batterer's design.
 - The batterer will use finances to manipulate the victim in her ability to support herself/children on her own.
6. Understand that domestic violence is not an anger management problem.
 - Batterers are experts at managing their anger. If not, the community would be able to identify these people easily by their violent outbursts in public, work, everyday life.

7. The victim's level of fear is valid. A victim is an expert in her life and the batterer's capability of violence.
 - A victim is usually accustomed to the end result of a batterer's form of control because they are conditioned over time to a variety of different types of violence (verbal, threats, physical, sexual, financial, coercion).
 - A look, gifts, or a note can have a terrifying effect on a victim even though the isolated event can seem harmless to an outsider.

8. You must understand the context in which a single incident has occurred.
 - A seemingly minor incident may in fact only be a reminder from the batterer to the victim, of what is yet to come or what the batterer is capable.

9. Batterer's are master manipulators.
 - Many batterers are experts in choosing what behavior gets the desired results; including violence and also charm.
 - Batterer's will use charm, gift buying, tearful apologies, etc., to achieve a desired result.
 - Many batterers will talk about how much they want to change. However, unless their words are put into action, it's a manipulation.

10. Understand that victims of domestic violence do not have a "weak" character or morality.
 - It take's courage and interpersonal strength to be able to live in a violent and unpredictable home.
 - Many victims endure the violence to protect threatened loved ones and children.

11. Help the victim prepare/store an emergency kit.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Order of Protection ▪ ATM card ▪ Money ▪ Check book/bank records ▪ Credit card ▪ Passport ▪ Green card ▪ Work permit ▪ Public Assistance ID ▪ Insurance policies/papers ▪ Important legal documents ▪ Police records ▪ Record of violence/diary ▪ Baby's things (diapers, formula, medication) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Children's school and immunization records ▪ Mobile phone/coins to use in a payphone ▪ Driver's license & registration ▪ Social security card ▪ Your partner's social security number ▪ Medical records ▪ Keys (car, home, safety deposit, P.O. box, etc.) ▪ Address book & important phone numbers ▪ Birth (including yourself)/marriage certificates, divorce, adoption papers, etc. ▪ Medications ▪ Clothing ▪ Eye glasses /contacts ▪ Lease /mortgage papers ▪ Non-perishable snacks for children (e.g. juice and crackers) |
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12. Learn about local service providers.

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| Women's Resource Center | 404-688-9436 |
| International Women's House | 404-299-1550 |
| DeKalb Rape Crisis Center | 404-377-1428 |
| United Way | 211 |
| United Way Resource Database Search | 211online.unitedwayatlanta.org |
| Georgia Commission on Family Violence | 404-657-3412 |
| Georgia Domestic Violence Hotline | 800-334-2836 |
| National Domestic Violence Hotline | 800-799-7233 |

13. Learn about local legal services.

- Bond Conditions
- Temporary Protective Orders
- Stalking Protective Orders
- Family Violence Act & the Criminal Justice System
- Georgia's Victim Compensation Program (medical bills, loss of work, etc.)
- Applying for a criminal arrest warrant
- Calling for police assistance
- Civil Resources (i.e., divorce, child custody, financial support)