



Grover Beach Police Department

Domestic violence affects the lives of millions of American families.

Nearly one-third of women report being physically or sexually abused by a husband or boyfriend at some point in their lives.

Statistics also reveal that abuse starts early: 40% of girls between the ages of 14 and 17-years old report that they know someone who has been hit, beaten or slapped by their boyfriend.

What is Domestic Abuse?

- It is a pattern of coercive behavior used to establish power and control over another person through fear and intimidation, often including the threat or use of violence.
- Domestic abuse usually happens as a result of **physical battering, sexual abuse, or psychological battering.**

Domestic Violence

- If you are a victim of domestic violence, you may believe that it's easier to stay with your abuser than to try to leave and risk retaliation. However, there are many things you can do to protect yourself while getting out of an abusive situation, and there are people waiting to help.
- If you need help immediately, **call 9-1-1.**

Signs of Domestic Violence

The following signs may indicate or lead to domestic abuse:

- Does your partner hit, punch, slap, or kick you? Does he make you have sex that makes you uncomfortable?
- Does your partner prevent you from going where you want and when you want to?
- Does your partner abuse alcohol or other drugs? There is a strong link between violence and problems with drugs and alcohol, but these substances are by no means excuses to abusive behaviors.
- Do you fear your partner when he gets angry? Does he always expect you to follow his orders?
- Does he threaten to hurt you or your children?

What can I do to protect myself from Domestic Violence?

- If you live with someone who abuses you, you need to protect yourself for the long term. If someone is stalking you, and you have a feeling that you might get hurt, trust your instincts and protect yourself.
- Take all threats seriously.
- Contact a domestic violence hotline to plan for your safe future. They can advise you on how to protect yourself, refer you to other services and shelters, and inform you about local laws and restraining orders.
- Develop a safety plan that specifies who will be with you when you need companionship and protection. Also plan for safety in your workplace or at your school.
- Call people who are willing to help you and tell them how they can help to protect you now and in the future.
- If you have been abused in front of others, ask witnesses to write down what they saw.
- Contact the police if your abuser has broken a law, or even if you just think they might have broken a law. Assaulting you or stealing or destroying your property is a crime.
- Consider getting a restraining order or protective order to keep your spouse or intimate partner away from you.
- Learn self-defense to protect yourself.

What you can you do to help someone you know is being abused

- You can help make a great difference in the life of someone who is being abused. The most important way to show someone you care is to be supportive and encouraging. If you suspect someone is being abused or you have some sense that something is wrong in your friend or relative's relationship, here are some of the signs that can help you identify if the abuse exists if the person;
- is afraid of their partner
- has stopped seeing family and/or friends
- cuts phone conversations short when their partner is in the room
- is controlled by and/or has all decisions made by partner (i.e. controls all the money, controls his/her outings etc.)
- often talks about his/her partner's jealousy, bad temper or possessiveness
- has physical injuries (bruises, broken bones, sprains, cuts, etc.)

If you are a Victim of Domestic Violence

Here is what you can do to protect yourself:

- Call **9-1-1** if you are in danger or need help.
- Talk to a friend or relative you trust for moral support.
- Contact your local domestic violence assistance program. Domestic violence programs can assist you in finding out about laws, shelters, counseling and financial assistance.
- If your friends or relatives are aware of your situation, set up signal code words either by phone or alternative methods that informs them that the situation at home is violent.
- If you have children, notify the school of any possible threats and/or the current custody situation. Make sure the school knows who can and cannot pick up the children and/or receive information about them or you.

###