

Are You Being Hurt?



If someone you are close to hurts you, then you may have experienced domestic violence.

Learn how to protect yourself.

What is Domestic Violence? Domestic violence happens when someone close to you:



- ▶ Hurts you physically or touches you in a way that makes you uncomfortable;
- ▶ Calls you names or makes fun of you;
- ▶ Takes things like your money away from you without asking you first;
- ▶ Does not take care of you by leaving you alone or not helping you when you need it;
- ▶ Threatens to or withholds medications from you or refuses to take you to the doctor;
- ▶ Makes you do things that you don't want to do;
- ▶ Does not allow you to talk to or visit your family and friends;
- ▶ Threatens to hurt you if you do not do what they want you to do;
- ▶ Does things that make you feel afraid, hurt or sad.

Am I Alone? No, you are not alone if you have experienced domestic violence.



- ▶ Sixty-two percent of a national sample of women with physical disabilities reported having experienced emotional, physical, or sexual abuse.¹
- ▶ Studies suggest that women with developmental disabilities are 4 to 10 times as likely to be sexually assaulted as other women are.²
- ▶ Other research shows that 99% of people with disabilities who experience abuse are violated by someone that they know.³
- ▶ Every 9 seconds a woman is battered in the United States.⁴
- ▶ Studies show that domestic violence is the leading cause of injury to women between the ages of 15 and 44.⁵



If you have a disability, you may be at a higher risk of experiencing domestic violence because:

- ▶ The person you may rely on for daily care could be abusing you.
- ▶ A perpetrator/abuser may try to use your disability to keep you away from people who care about you.
- ▶ A perpetrator/abuser may think that a women with a disability can't defend herself.

For women with disabilities who are abused, getting help can be difficult. Some reasons that getting help is more difficult are:

- ▶ If your caregiver is the abuser, they may have control over who you can talk to.
- ▶ Domestic violence workers may not be educated about the issues facing people with disabilities.
- ▶ Disability workers may not be educated about the issues facing survivors of domestic violence.

Even though someone you are close to may abuse you, there are ways to get help:

- ▶ Talk to someone that you trust about domestic violence and how it affects you.
- ▶ Contact local organizations that offer support and resources for survivors of domestic violence.
- ▶ Find a safe place to go if you need to get away from your abuser.
- ▶ Report your abuse to the police department.

Examples of people you may be able to trust are:

- ▶ Your family members
- ▶ Your friends
- ▶ A doctor or nurse
- ▶ Police officers
- ▶ Teachers

These people can listen to you and help you decide the best way to stop the abuse.

If you do not already have someone that you can trust to help you, you can contact these organizations:

Partnership Against Domestic Violence

- **Fulton County Crisis Line**
(404) 873-1766 V/TTY
- **Gwinnett County Crisis Line**
(770) 963-9799 V/TTY
- **Statewide Crisis Line**
(1-800) 33-Haven

Institute on Human Development and Disability

- **University of Georgia** (706) 542-2418

Project Safe

- (706) 543-3331
- (706) 354-1676 V/TTY

National Domestic Violence Hotline

- (800) 799-7233
- (800) 787-3224 V/TTY

These organizations can give you information that will help you. They also have programs and services that can offer you support.

Examples of programs and services that helpful organizations can offer to survivors of domestic violence are:

- ▶ 24-hour crisis lines for someone to talk to;
- ▶ Emergency shelters for a safe place to go to get away from the abuse;
- ▶ Domestic violence community support groups for women in various communities;
- ▶ Legal assistance and helpful guidance to know your rights and how to protect yourself;
- ▶ Support and information on how to end the abuse.

The shelters at Partnership Against Domestic Violence are wheelchair accessible and welcome service animals. Your caregiver can go with you to the shelter as long as that caregiver is not the abuser.

If you have experienced domestic violence, please remember that:

- ▶ Domestic violence is not your fault.
- ▶ You are not responsible for your partner's or caregiver's behavior.
- ▶ The longer you stay with your abuser, the more the violence will increase.
- ▶ Leaving your abuser without support from people you trust may be very dangerous.
- ▶ You have the right to live without fear and violence.
- ▶ No one deserves to be abused.

1 Abused And Women with Disabilities (Rev. 2/10/98), National Resource Center on Domestic Violence

2 Wilson & Brewer (1992)

3 Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault, 1999

4 AMA, 1998, Georgia Department of Human Resources, 1999

5 Uniform Crime Reports, FBI, 1991

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**Partnership Against
Domestic Violence**



Project Safe

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