

# WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ?

## DEFINITION:

Domestic violence is the mistreatment of one family member by another. Most often perpetrators of abuse and battering are: a spouse, an ex-spouse, boyfriend or lover. The abuse can be physical, sexual, verbal, emotional and psychological.

## TYPES OF ABUSE

### Physical Abuse

- pushed, shoved
- kicked
- dragged
- held down
- cut
- slapped, poked
- pulled hair
- restrained
- twisted arm
- squeezed
- tripped
- choked
- pinched
- thrown down stairs
- hit, punched
- spit at
- burned
- used/threatened with a gun, knife or other weapon
- grabbed
- thrown objects
- locked in the house
- kidnapped
- pushed out of the car
- abandoned in dangerous places
- suffocated
- banged head on wall
- bent fingers backward
- bit
- locked out a household member
- refused to help a sick or injured member

### Sexual Abuse

- raped / incest
- accused partner of affairs / bragged about your affairs
- treated others as sex objects
- forced children to watch sex acts
- told partner their body was disgusting / they were inadequate in bed
- wanted sex after abuse
- forced pregnancy
- beaten if refused sex
- brought other women home
- criticized partners' appearance
- made constant sexual demands
- forced to have sex with others
- withheld sex
- forced cohabitation
- insisted on unwanted and uncomfortable touching
- forced sadistic/violent sex acts
- made demeaning sexually suggestive remarks
- forced family members to see pornographic materials

### Emotional Abuse

- neglected a family member with inadequate physical or emotional care
- abused pets to hurt a family member
- tried to frighten and intimidate family member
- threatened, harassed
- controlled the money / refused to share money
- ridiculed, insulted, humiliated, called names
- jealous of friends and social acquaintances
- kept a family member isolated from other friends and family
- ignored, withheld affection or approval
- not allowed to go to school or work
- spent money on drugs / alcohol
- criticized, put down partner
- humiliated partner in private or public
- took car keys or money away from partner
- regularly threatened to leave partner or told partner to leave
- threatened to hurt partner's family
- destroyed furniture, punched holes in walls, broke appliances

**Persons who are abusive may also:** "Solve" problems only by using force, blame others for their behavior, talk about getting even, play with weapons, abuse alcohol and drugs, be obsessed with power over and controlling others.