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[Home](#) » [Agencies](#) » [Office on Violence Against Women](#) » [Areas of Focus](#) » Domestic Violence

[Printer Friendly](#)

[Office on Violence Against Women Home](#)

[About the Office](#)

[Meet OVW Leadership](#)

[Areas of Focus](#)

[Domestic Violence](#)

[Sexual Assault](#)

[Dating Violence](#)

[Stalking](#)

[Grant Programs](#)

[Tribal Communities](#)

[Reports to Congress](#)

[Selected Publications](#)

[Press Room](#)

[Careers](#)

[OVW FOIA](#)

[Contact the Office](#)

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Hotlines | What is Domestic Violence?

HOTLINES



National Domestic Violence Hotline
1-800-799-SAFE (7233)
1-800-787-3224 (TTY)

WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

We define domestic violence as a pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner. Domestic violence can be physical, sexual, emotional, economic, or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. This includes any behaviors that intimidate, manipulate, humiliate, isolate, frighten, terrorize, coerce, threaten, blame, hurt, injure, or wound someone.

Physical Abuse: Hitting, slapping, shoving, grabbing, pinching, biting, hair pulling, etc are types of physical abuse. This type of abuse also includes denying a partner medical care or forcing alcohol and/or drug use upon him or her.

Sexual Abuse: Coercing or attempting to coerce any sexual contact or behavior without consent. Sexual abuse includes, but is certainly not limited to, marital rape, attacks on sexual parts of the body, forcing sex after physical violence has occurred, or treating one in a sexually demeaning manner.

Emotional Abuse: Undermining an individual's sense of self-worth and/or self-esteem is abusive. This may include, but is not limited to constant criticism, diminishing one's abilities, name-calling, or damaging one's relationship with his or her children.

Economic Abuse: Is defined as making or attempting to make an individual financially dependent by maintaining total control over financial resources, withholding one's access to money, or forbidding one's attendance at school or employment.

Psychological Abuse: Elements of psychological abuse include - but are not limited to - causing fear by intimidation; threatening physical harm to self, partner, children, or partner's family or friends; destruction of pets and property; and forcing isolation from family, friends, or school and/or work.

Domestic violence can happen to anyone regardless of race, age, sexual orientation, religion, or gender. Domestic violence affects people of all socioeconomic backgrounds and education levels. Domestic violence occurs in both opposite-sex and same-sex relationships and can happen to intimate partners who are married, living together, or dating.

Domestic violence not only affects those who are abused, but also has a substantial effect on family members, friends, co-workers, other witnesses, and the community at large. Children, who grow up witnessing domestic violence, are among those seriously affected by this crime. Frequent exposure to violence in the home not only predisposes children to numerous social and physical problems, but also teaches them that violence is a normal way of life - therefore, increasing their risk of becoming society's next generation of victims and abusers.

Sources: National Domestic Violence Hotline, National Center for Victims of Crime, and WomensLaw.org.

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FIND LOCAL RESOURCES



VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACTION CENTER

[Find Help for Victims](#)

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**DEFENDING
CHILDHOOD**
PROTECT HEAL THRIVE

GENERAL INFORMATION OFFICE ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

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RESOURCES

[Forms](#)
[Publications](#)
[Case Highlights](#)
[Legislative Histories](#)

NEWS

[Justice News](#)
[The Justice Blog](#)
[Public Schedule](#)
[Videos](#)
[Photo Gallery](#)

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[Legal Careers](#)
[Interns, Recent Graduates, and Fellows](#)
[Diversity Policy](#)
[Veteran Recruitment](#)

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[A to Z Index](#)
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[Legal Policies & Disclaimers](#)[For Employees](#)
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