

Warning Signs Of An Abusive Relationship

Is their partner:

- Constantly checking up on them, questioning them about their friends and activities.
- Putting them down in public and private. Telling them they are worthless, criticizing them, making them feel crazy and humiliating them.
- Being extremely jealous and blaming their behavior for his/her jealousy and telling them it is a sign of love.
- Minimizing their fears or concerns about the relationship and his/her actions.
- Controlling who they see and what they do, sometimes even stopping them from seeing family, friends or from going to work.
- Threatening to destroy or destroying their personal possessions.
- Threatening to harm them, their children, their family members or their pets.

Five Statements to Open Lines of Communication

1. I am afraid for you.
2. I am afraid for your children.
3. It will only get worse.
4. Let me know how I can help.
5. You deserve better.

Violence Prevention Center of Southwestern Illinois

Provides:

- **24 hour crisis hotline - 235-0892**
- **The Charles T. & Joan Meyer Women's Shelter - 235-0892** for battered women and their dependent children.
- **The Peace Place - 236-2531**
 - Non-residential children's counseling services, ages 5-17
 - Shelter Services, all ages
- **Counseling & Advocacy Services**
 - Belleville Weidmann Counseling and Advocacy Services - **235-0892**
 - East St. Louis Violence Prevention Center **875-7970**
 - Randolph County Violence Prevention Center **826-5929**
 - Monroe County Violence Prevention Center **939-8114**
 - Randolph/Monroe County Toll Free **1-800-924-0096**
- **Prevention & Education Services 236-2531**

All Services are provided free of charge.
Call now to speak to someone who will listen.

Violence Prevention Center
Of Southwestern Illinois
P.O. Box 831
Belleville, Illinois 62222-0831
www.vpcswi.org

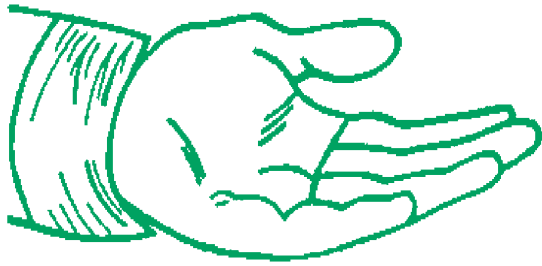
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**IS
SOMEONE
YOU KNOW
BEING ABUSED?**

**You've seen the
bruises.
You've heard the lies.
You want to help.**



The First Step Toward Peace



You have a friend in need. You want to help. What do you do? It is important to know a few things to better understand their situation.

They may not want to ask for help. They may be ashamed that they are being abused, and may believe it is their fault.

They may feel helpless. Their abuser may have told them many times, "If you leave me, I will find you and kill you and take the children away from you." Their fear is very real because most victims who are murdered by their abusers are killed leaving, not staying.

They may still love them. Though it may be hard to understand, they genuinely care about the abuser. They may think that if they try harder, they can change them.

They may think they cannot live without them. Think about how they will have to support themselves and their children. They may feel that it is just easier to stay in the relationship.

They may also stay due to other factors including religious beliefs, economic insecurity, and thinking that the children need to live with both parents.

With support from you, they can learn more about their options, identify their strengths and develop courage to leave the abuser.

Here are 10 ways you can help

1. Provide Them With Phone Numbers

The Violence Prevention Center's Hotline is answered 24 hours a day.

2. Get Help For You Call the Hotline to talk to someone about what you are feeling and going through while trying to reach out to her.

3. Keep In Touch Many battered women are isolated. Their abusers do not want them to see friends and family, so often they can't or don't make contact. By letting them know you care, even if they don't seem to want your help, you may help save their life. Your contact is a reminder of a safer reality.

4. Be Persistent If the abuser keeps track of them constantly, you may have others help you to speak to them alone. At a gathering, ask others you trust to "entertain" the abuser so you can speak to them alone.

5. Listen Without Judgement Don't judge them or their actions. Give them a chance to tell their story. Let them know that violence is a crime and is unacceptable, and that you are concerned for them.

6. Point Out Their Strengths For a long time, they may have been told that they are worthless. You can help point out their successes in life. If nothing else, they are surviving in the relationship, and that takes a lot of strength. By pointing out their strengths, they can remind themselves that they are a strong person, capable of making positive changes in their lives.

7. Be Specific About How You Can Help But remember that you cannot change them, you cannot rescue them. They must make the changes themselves.

8. Call The Police If You Witness An Assault They may gain strength from your courage to call on their behalf.

9. Pack A Bag For Her Keep a bag of extra clothes, shoes, extra keys, and important documents for them at your house. If they have to escape quickly, they will appreciate your concern.

10. Don't Give UP It is unlikely that they will change overnight, The Abuser has had a long time to "brainwash" them. Your patience, persistence, and genuine concern may get through to her next month, next year, or longer.

They may have been abused physically, emotionally, psychologically, or sexually. But they have already survived thus far and have a great deal of strength and courage.