

# Understanding Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is thought to be the most common, yet the least reported crime in the United States—it can happen to anyone of any race, age, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic background, or religion. There are many resources available to get help for yourself or a loved. There are also actions that all of us can take to help raise awareness and to work together to end violence in our communities.

## **What is Domestic Violence?**

Domestic violence is all about power and control. Abusers can control a person using many different tactics. These may include:

- Isolation from family or friends (controlling what a partner does or who they see)
- Emotional abuse (mind games, name-calling, or put-downs)
- Economic abuse (preventing access to money or a job; incurring debt in a partner's name)
- Intimidation (by using looks, destroying things, abusing pets, displaying weapons)
- Stalking (unwanted phone calls and texts, following or spying, leaving unwanted items)
- Sexual assault (unwanted or unwelcomed sexual acts, rape, or reproductive coercion)
- Actual or threatened physical harm (hitting, kicking, choking, preventing medical attention)

## **Spotting the Warning Signs**

The following are potential signs of someone who is experiencing domestic violence:

- Low self-esteem
- Complaints about non-specific aches and pains that are constant and recurring
- Unexplained cuts or bruises
- Not allowed use of the phone, or constant texts or calls from a partner
- Forbidden from seeing friends unless partner is along
- Little or no control over household finances
- Not allowed to make decisions or get a job
- Absenteeism from work
- Withdrawal from social situations

## **Work to End Domestic Violence**

- Listen to victims and survivors without judgment, and respect their choices.
- Act to build a culture of respect, equity, and safety in your home, workplace, and community.
- Use your voice to stand against victim-blaming, discrimination, and violence to end the stigma towards victims and survivors.
- Participate in Bystander Intervention training

## **Call Your EAP**

The EAP is ready to help you troubleshoot problems, examine options, deal with hard choices, and face the future. If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence and need more information or assistance, please call us to schedule counseling or a consultation by phone.

## **Resources**

[EAP's Stop Domestic Violence Brochure](#)

[Workplaces Respond to Domestic & Sexual Violence](#)

[Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence](#)

[National Domestic Violence Hotline](#): 1-800-799-7233 / TTY 1-800-787-3224



Washington State EAP is accessible, free, and confidential.  
Contact us today at 877.313.4455 or [eap.wa.gov](http://eap.wa.gov)