

## IF YOU ARE BEING ABUSED, YOU MIGHT...

- > Believe it's your fault.
- > Feel angry, sad, lonely, depressed, or confused.
- > Feel helpless to stop the abuse.
- > Feel threatened, humiliated, or ashamed.
- > Feel anxious, trapped, or lonely.
- > Worry about what might happen next.
- > Feel like you can't talk to family or friends.
- > Be afraid of getting hurt.
- > Feel protective of your boyfriend or girlfriend.
- > Feel bad about yourself because the abuser says you are stupid, lazy, ugly, worthless, helpless, crazy, or things like that.

These are normal reactions to being abused.

You are not alone.

## IF SOMEONE YOU KNOW IS BEING ABUSED, YOU CAN HELP

- > Listen. Show support. Don't blame the victim for the crime. Tell your friend that you're worried about them. Ask how you can help.
- > Encourage your friend to seek help; give them information about victim service providers.
- > Avoid confronting the abuser. It could be dangerous.
- > Instead of deciding what's best for your friend, help your friend make their own decisions.
- > Find someone you can talk to about your feelings about the situation.
- > For more ideas on how you can help, call 1-800-FYI-CALL.

THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR  
**Victims of Crime**

We can help. The National Center for Victims of Crime can help you make a safety plan, learn more about your legal rights, and find help in your area.

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[www.ncvc.org](http://www.ncvc.org)  
[gethelp@ncvc.org](mailto:gethelp@ncvc.org)

If you are in immediate danger, call 911.

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Porterville College  
Safety & Security  
SM-SS 102A  
559-791-2440/310-2143

is it  
**ABUSE?**

**Dating Violence**

## IS IT DATING VIOLENCE?

If the person you're involved with acts controlling, aggressive, coercive, or violent, that's abuse. Relationships can be abusive even if there is no hitting: abuse can be verbal, emotional, physical, or sexual, or a combination of these.

One in five teenagers has experienced violence in a dating relationship.

### Ask yourself: Does my boyfriend or girlfriend...

- Call or page me frequently to find out where I am, who I'm with, or what I'm doing?
- Tell me what to wear?
- Have to be with me all the time?
- Call me names, insult me, or criticize me?
- Act jealous, possessive, controlling, or bossy?
- Give me orders or make all the decisions?
- Get angry very quickly, or fight a lot?
- Threaten to hurt me or someone in my family if I don't do what they want?
- Threaten to hurt themselves if I don't do what they want?
- Follow me or track where I go? Show up repeatedly at my home or work uninvited? Check up on me all the time?
- Refuse to allow me normal contact with my family and friends?
- Shove, punch, slap, pinch, kick, or hit me? Pull my hair? Strangle or choke me?
- Touch or kiss me when I don't want to? Force me to have sex? Not let me use birth control?
- Use alcohol or drugs and pressure me to do it too?
- Refuse to accept that the relationship isn't working or is over?

### If so, you are in an abusive relationship. We can help.

Anyone can be involved with an abuser. It can happen in straight or gay relationships. Both women and men are victims, but women and men abuse their partners in different ways. In some relationships the abuse only happens once in a while; in others it's every day.

Girls and women ages 16 to 24 are most likely to be abused in a dating relationship.

## THINGS YOU CAN DO

Abuse can be unpredictable and dangerous. No two situations are alike, and there are no guarantees that what works for one person will work for another. Yet you can take steps to increase your safety:

- > If you are in **immediate danger**, call 911 or Safety & Security at 559-791-2440/310-2143.
- > Trust your **instincts**. Don't downplay the danger. If you feel unsafe, you probably are.
- > Take **threats** seriously. Danger often is highest when the abuser talks about suicide or murder, or when a victim tries to leave or end the relationship.
- > Get **help** from a crisis hotline, domestic violence program, campus health or counseling center, or victim services agency. They can help you make a safety plan, give you information about laws in your state, refer you to other services, and weigh options such as seeking a protection order.
- > Develop a **safety plan** for when you go to class, the dining or residence hall, your job—or for other social situations. Involve friends and college staff, and keep a log of times the abuser contacts, threatens, follows, or harms you. Report all instances to Safety & Security at 559-791-2440/310-2143.
- > Some types of abuse are crimes and you can file a report with the **police**. Campus judicial programs can provide sanctions for on-campus violations.
- > **Tell** your friends, roommates, and others about the abuse and seek their support. Tell Public Safety staff at the college and at work. Ask them to watch out for you.