

What I Can Do

No matter what happens between your parents, it's not your fault and it's not your job to fix it or to protect a parent. The best thing you can do to help is to stay safe.

If something happens, you can:

- Not get in the middle
- Go to a safe place, like:
 - Your Room
 - Outside
 - Neighbor's or Friend's House
 - Library
 - School
- Stay away from the kitchen & garage, where it's easy to get hurt, and avoid small rooms where you could get trapped (i.e., bathrooms, closets)
- Tell someone you trust, and keep telling until someone believes you

If you think you and others may need to leave suddenly, plan ahead by:

- Keeping a bag with extra clothes at a friend's house or at school
- Keep an extra set of car keys somewhere that you'd be able to get to easily
- Talk with a friend or another trusted person and ask if you can stay there if you need to leave your house suddenly
- Have a code word with the non-abusive parent that you can use if she wants you to call the police, leave the house, etc.

***Remember,
no one deserves to be abused.***

Phone Numbers to Remember

Police/Local Emergency - 911

Other People I Can Call For Help:
Teacher/School Counselor:

Pastor/Youth Leader:

Other Family Members:

Nebraska's coalition of domestic violence and sexual assault agencies provide access to safety and shelter across the state. To locate the program nearest you, visit www.ndvsac.org.

Hotlines & Websites:

- 1-800-799-SAFE (7233)
National Domestic Violence Hotline,
www.ndvh.org
- 1-866-331-9474
National Teen Dating Abuse
Helpline, www.loveisrespect.org
- 1-800-656-HOPE (4673)
National Sexual Assault Hotline,
www.rainn.org
- 1-877-215-0167 (en español)
Línea de Crisis en Nebraska
- 1-800-448-3000
Girls & Boys Town National Hotline
- Step Up Speak Out
www.stepupspeakout.org
- National Center for Victims of Crime
www.ncvc.org

This publication was made possible by Grant Number 2010 G991540 from the Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

VIOLENCE IN THE HOME



INFORMATION FOR TEENS



Nebraska Domestic Violence
Sexual Assault Coalition
www.ndvsac.org
402-476-6256

Domestic Violence

Many teens live in a home where one parent hurts the other parent, often called domestic violence. This can be defined as a pattern of behaviors, including physical, emotional, sexual, and economic attacks. Examples include:

- Isolating from family/ friends;
- Calling them names & making them feel bad about themselves;
- Making them do things;
- Not allowing access to money, cars or other financial resources; and
- Using children, teens, and pets in the home to get the other parent to do what he/she wants.



How Does This Affect Me?

It can be scary and confusing when this happens, especially if the abusive parent seems like a different person when others are around. It is also confusing because he/she is still a parent. You may still love them and want to spend time with them. You may also be worried and scared for the other parent and not know what to do.

You may feel angry, hurt, scared, or even betrayed by one or both parents. This is common if there have been promises of ending the violence. You could also feel embarrassed by your family. You might not invite friends to your house, not accept rides home, and not tell your parents about school events.

You may not always know what to do, or you may try to stop the “fight.” You may want to take care of one of your parents, and worry about being away from home.

The abusive parent may include you in the abuse. For example, he/she may:

- Ask you to pick sides;
- Ask you to spy, especially if your parents don’t live together;
- Ask you to keep secrets from others;
- Be overly permissive so he/she is the “good parent;” or
- Ask you to say mean things to the other parent, and/or physically hurt them.

Sometimes teens and younger children are hurt as well as one of the parents. If someone is hurting you or someone else, **the abuse is not your fault!** It is okay to talk about what’s happening. Talk to people you trust, like your other parent, a teacher, a youth pastor, friend or neighbor.



Coping Strategies

Everyone deals with domestic violence differently. There is no right or wrong way. However some strategies are less healthy than others. Here are some helpful things.

- Talk to someone your trust.
- Express yourself by writing in a journal.
- Focus your energy on school.
- Get involved in activities outside of home, through school or community.
- Avoid violence in other places (i.e., violent videogames, music, or movies).
- Exercise.

Unhealthy strategies include running away, getting into serious relationships quickly to escape your home life, cutting, eating disorders, and using alcohol or drugs to block out what’s happening.

If you are doing any of these, it’s helpful to talk with someone, like a school counselor or someone from a domestic violence/sexual assault program. *If you tell someone, they may need to share the information with police or child protective services.* You can call a domestic violence hotline and remain anonymous.

Things to Remember: Most adult victims actively try to protect themselves and their children. Sometimes it’s hard to know what’s being done because the parent may not want to involve you. It’s okay to ask your parent to talk about it.



Talking About It

It’s hard to talk about what’s happening. You may be nervous of what people will say, worried that no one will believe you, or worried that they will blame you. You may be afraid of what will happen if the abusive parent finds out. However, it’s important to talk to someone you trust about the situation.

It is also important to remember that the blame and responsibility for the abuse should be directed toward the abusive person and **NOT** the victim. **No one deserves to be abused.**