



Memphis Area
WOMEN'S COUNCIL
 CONVENE COLLABORATE COMMUNICATE = CHANGE

Domestic crime remains a persistent and devastating social ill in our community. It takes place in homes across Memphis and Shelby County every day.

HOW THE COMMUNITY CAN RESPOND

You can help if you suspect that someone you know is living in an abusive relationship. Your support of someone who is being abused can make a critical difference. If she feels supported and encouraged, she may feel stronger and more able to make decisions. If she feels judged or criticized, she could be afraid to tell anyone else about the abuse again.

Signs that someone is being abused:

- Fears his/her partner or is always anxious to please him or her.
- Stops seeing friends or family, cuts phone conversations short when the partner is in the room, citing the partner's "jealousy" or "possessiveness"
- Is criticized or humiliated in front of other people; partner makes all the decisions (for example, controls all the money, controls who she can see and what she can do).
- Exhibits physical injuries (bruises, broken bones, sprains, cuts etc.) and may give unlikely explanations for them.
- Is reluctant to leave his/her children with the partner; the children are anxious or afraid of the partner.
- Gets harassed, followed or obsessively called by the partner after leaving the relationship.

Why it may be hard to leave:

- Fear of what the abuser will do or that the abuse will get worse if they leave. The abuser may have threatened to harm himself, her, her relatives, or the children, pets or property.
- Dependence on the abuser for a place to live, access to money or transportation and for assistance if disabled; experiences feelings of powerlessness, isolation and loneliness.
- Love (since the abuser might not be violent all the time), a commitment to the relationship or a belief that marriage is forever, "for better or worse."
- Pressure from family, community or religious creed to stay.
- Faith that the abuser will change, stop drinking and then stop beating, etc.
- Guilt - she thinks the abuse is her fault.

How to help:

- **LISTEN:** Without judging, respect her decisions, and help her to find ways to become stronger and safer.
- **BELIEVE:** Take it seriously. Tell her she is brave. It will have taken a lot for her to talk to you. People are much more likely to downplay the abuse than to make it up or exaggerate. Don't underestimate the danger she may be in.
- **PROVIDE INFORMATION:** Remind her that if she calls a help line, she will get support and information. They won't pressure her to leave if she doesn't want to.

- **DEVELOP A SAFETY PLAN:** Help her to think about what she can do and how to protect herself. Identify “safe” areas at home with more than one exit and no items that can become weapons; Identify and tell trustworthy neighbors in case she needs help; Have an easily accessible phone; Keep some money, copies of important papers for her and children and a change of clothes hidden or in care of a friend if she decides to go to a shelter. Plan what to do about the children if they are at school, asleep, etc., and practice the safety plan with them.
- **OFFER PRACTICAL ASSISTANCE:** Mind the children, cook a meal, offer her a safe place to stay, transportation or to accompany her to court.
- **SUPPORT HER AFTER SHE HAS LEFT THE RELATIONSHIP:** The period of separation can be dangerous as the abuse may increase. She may need practical support and encouragement as she starts a new life. Help her find counseling or join a support group.
- **VOLUNTEER, DONATE, AND SUPPORT** organizations and agencies that help victims of domestic crime. Go to erasedomesticcrime.com or phone 545-4357 for opportunities and places to help.
- **REPORT DOMESTIC CRIME:** If you witness or overhear physical violence or threats and believe there is immediate physical danger to any adult or child, dial the police at 911 immediately.

Safety Planning

Identify “safe” areas in your house. These are areas with more than one exit and areas that do not contain items which could be used as weapons.

Tell people you trust in the neighborhood or at work what is happening and make a plan with them in case you need help.

If possible, always have an easily accessible phone.

Keep important items (documents, medications) together in a place you can get to quickly if you need to leave.

Talk to your children about safety. Tell them not to get involved in violence between you and your partner. Teach them how to get help and practice your safety plan with them.

Circle of Inspiration Outreach Program
Inspirational Faith Lutheran Church
Semi-monthly Christian support group; victim advocacy
(901) 359-8516
3595 N. Thomas Street

Cocaine Alcohol Awareness Program
Serves disadvantaged domestic violence victims; 24-hour crisis line
(901) 367-7550
4023 Knight Arnold Road

Community Legal Center
Legal assistance
(901) 543-3395
910 Vance Avenue

Department of Children’s Services
Social services, child protection
(901) 578-4371
170 N. Main Street, 4th floor

Exchange Club Family Center
Comprehensive services for victims, perpetrators and children; lethality assessments, custodial evaluations
(901) 276-2200 8:30 a.m. -5:00 p.m.
2180 Union Avenue

Family Safety Center**
Comprehensive services for families who are victims of domestic violence
www.fscmemphis.com
(901) 222-4400
1750 Madison Avenue*

The Healing Word Counseling Center
Counseling and various services
(901) 370-4673
3910 Tchulahoma Road

Memphis Area Legal Services
Comprehensive legal services to domestic violence victims
(901) 523-8822 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
109 N. Main St., 2nd floor

Memphis Area Women’s Council / Erase
Domestic Crime Collaborative
Community awareness and education; system coordination, change and support; prevention
(901) 378-3866
2574 Sam Cooper Blvd.

Memphis Child Advocacy Center
Counseling for child victims of sexual and severe physical abuse; houses Child Protection Investigation Team
(901) 525-2377
1085 Poplar Avenue

Memphis Police Department Domestic Violence Bureau*
Assault investigation, transport to victim services
(901) 636-3741
201 Poplar Avenue

MidSouth Sexual Assault Resource Center*
Services 24/7 to victims of sexual assault and abuse
(901) 222-4350 8:30 am -5:00 pm
2675 Union Extended

Shelby County Citizens Dispute*
Assists victims obtaining orders/warrants
(901) 545-2520 8:00 a.m. -4:30 p.m.
201 Poplar Avenue

Shelby County Crime Victims Center*
Court assistance, counseling, support groups, other services
(901) 222-3975 8:00 a.m. -4:30 p.m.
600 Adams Avenue

Shelby County District Attorney General’s DV Unit*
Prosecution of DV cases; victim advocacy and links to services
(901) 545-5900
1750 Madison Ave*

Sophia’s House
Shelter, other services for women and children victims
(901) 728-4229 or (901) 722-4700

Victims to Victory Incorporated
Support groups for victims of homicide; court advocacy
(901) 274-6828 9:00 a.m. -5:00 p.m.
1548 Poplar Avenue

YWCA of Greater Memphis
Shelter for abused women, children under 12 ; counseling, court advocacy, Immigrant Women’s Services
24-Hour Hotline (901) 725-4277

*Co-located in the Family Safety Center as of Spring 2012