

CONCERN/EAP

A Program of River Valley Counseling Center, Inc.
Located At Holyoke Medical Center

Quarterly Newsletter

October 2015

For Confidential Assistance or an Appointment Call: 534-2625

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Domestic violence (also known as intimate partner violence) can happen to anyone, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, income, or other factors. Domestic violence and emotional abuse are behaviors used by one person in a relationship to control the other. Partners may be married or not married; heterosexual, gay, or lesbian; living together, separated or dating. 1 in 4 women will experience domestic violence during her lifetime.

Domestic violence and emotional abuse should never happen to anyone. There isn't a "better" or "worse" form of domestic abuse, and no incident should be minimized. Studies indicate that if your spouse/partner has injured you once, it is likely that there will be future incidents of physical assault. Emotional abuse can also leave deep and lasting scars. In fact, it can be just as damaging as physical abuse – and sometimes even more so.

Recognizing and acknowledging the signs of emotional abuse and domestic violence is the first step toward ending it. If you recognize yourself or someone you know in the following description of abuse, reach out for help. There are many resources available to you. Take a moment to consider these questions:

*DOES YOUR PARTNER:

- isolate you from friends or family?
- have a personality that is either cool and charming, or exceptionally cruel, depending on his/her mood and who else is present?
- have an explosive temper that is easily triggered by minor frustrations or arguments?
- act excessively jealous and possessive?
- constantly check up on you?
- control what you do or where you go?
- frequently criticize, humiliate, or ridicule you?
- treat you so badly that you're embarrassed for your friends or family to see?
- rigidly control your access to money, credit cards, the phone, or the car?
- steal from you or create debt for you to handle?
- threaten to take away your children?
- throw away your belongings, destroy objects or threaten pets?

- sabotage your job by calling constantly or making you miss work?
- blame you for his or her abusive behavior?
- see you as property or a sex object, rather than as a person?
- hurt you, or threaten to hurt or kill you?

*DO YOU:

- feel like your walking on egg shells?
- wonder if you're the one who is crazy?
- feel that you can't do anything right for your partner?
- avoid certain topics to avoid angering your partner?
- not see family or friends to avoid his/her jealousy or anger?
- rationalize why you are being mistreated?
- feel emotionally numb or helpless?

If you suspect that someone you know is being abused, express your concern to them privately. Describe the things you've noticed that make you worry and encourage them to get help or support.

If your partner has been abusive, it is not your fault. Your partner, and only your partner, is responsible for his or her abusive behavior. You are not alone. There are many resources available to you in our community. Planning for your emotional and physical safety is extremely important. CONCERN/EAP is a free and confidential source of support, and a resource to connect you with ongoing help. You can also call the nearest domestic violence program 24 hours/day:

SAFE PASSAGE	Northampton	413.586.5066
WOMANSHELTER/ COMPANERAS	Holyoke	413.536.1628
YWCA /ARCH	Springfield	1.800.796.8711
YWCA / NEW BEGINNINGS	Westfield	1.800.479.6245
MEN'S RESOURCE CENTER	Amherst	413.253.9887