

# Domestic / Relationship Violence

## FACT SHEET

“I think that [violence] causes [Aboriginal girls] to feel low self-esteem, anger, hatred, sadness, isolation.”

- Age 19, Ontario

“It gets worse and worse and never goes away”

- Age 21, Nova Scotia



## Definitions

- Domestic violence occurs when a family member, partner or ex-partner attempts to physically or psychologically dominate or harm the other. The term "intimate partner violence" (IPV) is often used synonymously, other terms have included "wife beating", "wife battering", "relationship violence", "domestic abuse", "spousal abuse", and "family violence" with some legal jurisdictions having specific definitions.

*[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Domestic\\_violence](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Domestic_violence)*

- Domestic violence includes any physical violence, threats of violence or criminal harassment between two persons who are or have been involved in an intimate relationship of partners, whether or not they live together

*(excerpt from the Ottawa-Carleton Regional Police Service Brochure)*

- 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.

*<http://www.therapistfinder.net/Domestic-Violence>*

**"Because they don't have the self-esteem to know that  
there is someone amazing out there for them.  
They think they might never find them"  
- Age 19, Ontario**

1999 Statistics Canada data reports that from 7,400 Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women that 12.6 % of Aboriginal women had been victims of violence by their current partners in the previous five years.

For non-Aboriginal women, they report the figure was just 3.5%.

*(Assessing Violence Against Women: A Statistical Profile 1999).*



## Abuse by Partner

Examples of abuse include:

- name-calling or putdowns
- keeping a partner from contacting their family or friends
- withholding money
- stopping a partner from getting or keeping a job
- actual or threatened physical harm
- sexual assault
- stalking
- intimidation

Violence can be criminal and includes physical assault (hitting, pushing, shoving, etc.), sexual abuse (unwanted or forced sexual activity), and stalking. Although emotional, psychological and financial abuse are not criminal behaviours, they are forms of abuse and can lead to criminal violence.

## Warning Signs of Relationship Abuse

### The abused woman:

- shows guilt, ambivalence, and fear over living conditions.
- feels isolated and untrusting of others, even though she may be involved in the community.
- is emotionally and economically dependent.
- has a poor self-concept (this may not have been true BEFORE the relationship).
- has observed other women in her family being abused or may have been abused

as a child.

- feels angry, embarrassed, and ashamed.
- is fearful of being insane.
- has learned to feel helpless and feels powerless.
- has unexplained injuries that may go untreated.

### The abusive man:

- shows xtreme jealousy and wants to keep the woman isolated.
- has an inability to cope with stress and shows a lack of impulse control.  
(This may not necessarily appear outside the home)
- has a poor self-image and blames others for problems.
- shows severe mood swings.
- may have a history of abuse in his own family and may have been abusive in courtship.
- presents a history of personal and/or family discord; unemployment, cruelty to animals, abuse of alcohol or other substances, and other unexplained behavior.

*Domestic Violence Handbook: <http://www.domesticviolence.org/define.html>*

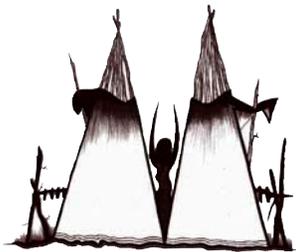
*Women's Rural Advocacy programs: <http://www.letswrap.com/dvinfo/warning.html>*



## Domestic / Relationship Violence - Early Warning Signs

Identified by NWAC Youth

- yelling, breaking things, verbal abuse
- being possessive
- abuser experiencing or witnessing abuse as well
- making you feel guilty
- belittling, humiliating you
- loosing temper then blaming you
- disrespects you
- forcibly isolates you
- the way your partner treats his/her friends, parents
- feeling uncomfortable around your partner
- partner telling you what to wear, where to go, making choices for you
- expecting trust from you too soon
- having abusive past
- inflicts emotional abuse
- wants control over you
- always making excuses
- showing extreme jealousy
- wants to know where you are at all times
- gets upset if you spend time with friends or family
- expects you to do “woman’s work”
- being overly authoritarian parent
- blames others and you for his problems
- threatens you with physical violence
- It’s all about him/her
- overly dependent on you
- demonstrating short temper
- uses name calling on you and others



## If It Happens To Me...

- consult professionals and service providers
- reach out to people you trust
- learn about resources available in your community
- turn to your culture for healing

## You Should Know...

- it is not your fault
- you do not deserve it
- there are people out there that can help you out
- it is not normal nor acceptable
- it is not stupid or dumb to seek help and use available resources

## What You Can Do

- deliver NWAC Youth Violence Prevention Workshop in your community
- encourage your peers to talk about it and ways to address the issue in your community
- raise awareness through youth projects (e.g. youth walks, fundraisers, youth committees)
- organize community sharing circles
- talk to Elders to see how traditional teachings may help in educating youth on violence issues
- advocate that the issue is not taken lightly in communities
- talk to youth on these issues from early age
- look into community resources that offer traditional approach (if there is no such resources, do something about it, ask why they are they not there, get them started)
- learn about Elder’s role in the community

