

# SEXUAL ASSAULT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



You're not alone.  
We can help.

This publication was made possible by a grant from

METROWEST  
COMMUNITY  
HEALTH CARE  
FOUNDATION

## *Voices Against Violence*

Breaking the Silence to End Sexual Assault  
and Domestic/Partner Violence

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Disclaimer:  
 This booklet was created to help educate and support survivors/victims of Sexual Assault and Domestic/Partner Violence. It is not intended to replace counseling, visits to the Emergency Room, or other needed services and is for informational purposes only. The information within this booklet is up to date at the time of printing. Voices Against Violence disclaims any responsibility for future changes.

*Voices Against Violence* (VAV) is a program of the South Middlesex Opportunity Council (SMOC). We provide information, counseling, and support to survivors/victims of sexual assault and/or domestic/partner violence and their significant others in the Metrowest area.

All of our services are **FREE and CONFIDENTIAL** to all people regardless of race, religion, age, income, marital status, lifestyle, gender or sexual orientation.

Services are available in English, Spanish, and Portuguese.

## Our Philosophy

To **empower** our participants by giving them knowledge and tools to be able to make decisions regarding their own lives and the lives of their children.

To help each participant create a **support network** as s/he plans for a safe future for her/himself and her/his children.

To provide **free and confidential** services.

**Our Services** include, but are not limited to:

- Crisis Intervention and 24-Hour Hotline (Voice/TTY)
- Spanish and Portuguese speaking staff available during office hours
- Counseling and Support Groups
- Confidential Emergency Shelter/Safe Home
- Legal Advocacy
- Medical Advocacy
- Community Education and Outreach
- Women’s Advocate Program
- Transition to Independent Living Program (TIL)
- Referrals to resources: schools, childcare, health and legal services, etc.
- Clothesline Project
- Lawyer for the Day Program
- Victim Advocacy Program



For more information, please call our office at **508-820-0834** or our 24-hour Hotline (Voice/TTY) at **508-626-8686** or **1-800-593-1125**.



We Speak  
English

Falamos  
Português

Se habla  
Español

## Domestic/Partner Violence

Domestic/Partner Violence is NEVER the victim's fault!

DOMESTIC/PARTNER VIOLENCE is the pattern of coercive behavior used by one partner in an intimate relationship to control the actions, thoughts and beliefs of the other partner. This dynamic of power and control is gained through humiliation, intimidation, fear, and intentional physical, verbal, emotional, economic, and/or sexual abuse. This includes threats of physical harm, threats to harm children, and other behaviors used to induce fear and establish power.

Domestic/Partner violence often starts with acts of jealousy, possessiveness and comments and attitudes that lower self-esteem. This emotional and verbal abuse increases over time and often, but not always, leads to physical and/or sexual abuse.

Domestic/Partner violence affects people of all ethnic backgrounds, socioeconomic levels, ages, religions, cultures, genders and sexual orientations. No one is immune from its effects nor are there any specific risk factors that relate to domestic/partner violence on either the abused or the abuser's side.

### Domestic/Partner violence is NEVER the victim's fault!

No one deserves to be controlled, abused, raped or disempowered.

## Danger Signs

Below are some danger signs to look for to identify an unhealthy and potentially abusive relationship:

- Abuse increases with use of alcohol and/or drugs
- One partner is overly dependent on the relationship
- One partner is convinced or forced to quit work or school
- Only one partner controls the money and financial decisions
- One partner threatens and/or attempts suicide over the relationship
- One partner is pressured or forced to engage in unwanted sexual behavior/sex
- One partner attempts to isolate the other partner from family and friends
- Poor communication skills
- Extensive criticism
- Possessiveness
- Extreme jealousy

## Different Kinds of Abuse

Most people connect the term domestic/partner violence with physical abuse, but it is important to remember that an abusive situation does not have to involve physical harm. Many abusive situations involve non-physical abuse, such as verbal, emotional, and economic abuse. It is also important to remember that, in the long term, the non-physical abuse can be the most damaging.

### Some Examples of Different Types of Abuse Are:

**Verbal abuse** includes such things as name calling, swearing, threatening, yelling, teasing, put downs and bossing around.

**Emotional abuse** includes behaviors such as criticizing, ridiculing, insults, humiliation, harassment, preventing contact with family and friends (isolation), ignoring feelings, withholding affection as a form of punishment and manipulating the partner through the use of lies and contradictions.

**Sexual abuse** can include treating the partner as a sex object, withholding sex and affection as a form of punishment, forcing the partner to have sex against her/his will, forcing the partner to watch and/or perform pornographic acts, forcing the partner to strip. Forcing the partner to engage in sex outside the relationship can also be sexual abuse.

**Economic abuse** can include requiring total control of the household finances/money, withholding money as punishment, forcing the partner to turn over her/his paycheck or denying her/him the right to work, preventing the partner from having a personal bank account, or excluding her/his name on important documents, such as a lease or mortgage. Additionally, refusing to work or share in financial responsibilities can also be a form of economic abuse.

**Physical abuse** might include pushing, slapping, kicking, punching, attempting to strangle the partner, causing injuries or threatening with a weapon, abusing or threatening to abuse children and other family members or friends. Physically preventing the partner from leaving or entering the house, abandoning the partner in dangerous places, refusing to help, or preventing the partner from seeking her/his own help while sick or injured is also physical abuse. Further, destruction of property, forcing the partner to get an abortion or causing her to miscarry, abusing animals/pets, exposing the partner to physical risks (reckless driving etc.), and throwing objects at her/him are physically abusive.

## Safety Planning

Just as each individual is different, so is every situation, therefore, there is no one safety plan or strategy that can fully protect a person in a situation of violence. Please consider the following guidelines to help you feel, and possibly be, a little safer:

- If an argument seems unavoidable, try to have it in a room that has an exit. Avoid bathrooms, the kitchen, or anywhere near possible weapons or hard surfaces.
- Practice how to get out of your home safely and decide where you would go.
- Tell a trusted neighbor about the violence and ask them to call the police if they hear a fight coming from your home.
- Create a code word to use with your children, family, friends, and neighbors as a signal that you need the police. Teach the children to dial 911.
- Leave a bag in a safe place so you can leave quickly. (See Check List)
- Always carry a cell phone, a calling card, or change, as well as the police and shelter phone numbers in case of an emergency. (See Resources)

**REMEMBER – the time of separation from the abuser and the time immediately following can be the most dangerous time for a victim.**

- If you have a restraining order – keep a copy with you at all times and call the police if it is violated.
- Inform family, friends, co-workers, neighbors and your children's school/teachers that you have a restraining order in effect. If possible, give them a copy of the restraining order and let them know who is/isn't permitted on your property and who is/isn't permitted to be with your children.
- Discuss a safety plan with your children for when you are not with them.
- Create a safety plan for travel: have escorts to and from your transportation, use different roads and decide what you would do if something happened.
- Change the locks on your doors and secure your windows.
- Change to an unlisted phone number and if possible, screen your phone calls.
- If you are thinking of returning to a potentially abusive situation, discuss an alternative plan with someone you trust.
- If you have to communicate with your partner, find the safest way for you and your children. Use a friend or even a lawyer as a mediator.
- Find a trusted friend or domestic/partner violence hotline that you can call so that you can get the support you need.

## Safety Planning - Checklist

In case of a future dangerous incident where you have to leave your home immediately, gather these things together (or make copies) and keep them in a safe place;

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Money              | <input type="checkbox"/> Green Card/Visa                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jewelry            | <input type="checkbox"/> Restraining Order                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pictures           | <input type="checkbox"/> House and car keys                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Passports          | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Security Card                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medications        | <input type="checkbox"/> Children's small toys                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Work Permit        | <input type="checkbox"/> Welfare Identification               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Identification     | <input type="checkbox"/> Small objects to sell                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Address book       | <input type="checkbox"/> Lease/rental agreement or house deed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Divorce Papers     |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School Records     |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bank/check books   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Driver's license   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medical records    |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Birth certificates |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Insurance papers   |   |



*You have the right to be safe!*

For more information about safety planning, contact an advocate at your local court, police department, or call our 24-hour Hotline (Voice/TTY) at **508-626-8686** or **1-800-593-1125**.

## Why Someone Might Stay in an Abusive Relationship

Many factors play into the decision about whether or not a person feels that s/he has the ability or option to leave an abusive situation. Some of these factors include, but are not limited to:

- Isolation
- Victim blaming
- Hope for change
- Internalization of blame
- Threats of harm
- Low self-esteem
- Fear
- Depression

Other reasons why people choose to stay in a violent relationship include concern for their children, lack of information about who can help, lack of the financial resources to move, fear of being deported and pressure from society, peers, their religious community or family.

Drug and/or alcohol abuse, length of relationship, feelings of shame and/or humiliation, and lack of general support can also make a person feel unable to leave an abusive relationship.

Many victims don't want the relationship to end, they just want the abuse to stop. When and if a person will leave a relationship is a personal choice that no one else can make.

## Sexual Assault/Rape

Sexual Assault is NEVER the survivor's/victim's fault!

In Massachusetts **rape is defined** as – “sexual intercourse or unnatural sexual intercourse committed against one’s will with the use of force or threat of bodily injury. Rape includes penetration into any bodily orifice (mouth, anus, or vagina) by a penis, finger, tongue or any other object.” (Massachusetts General Laws c. 265, 22)

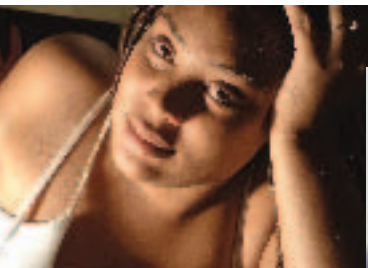
Anyone – men, women, children – regardless of age, income, sexual orientation, gender, or social standing can be, and are, the **victims of sexual assault**. 1 in 4 females and 1 in 6 males will be victims of sexual violence in their lifetime. (National Institute of Justice, 2000)

Sexual assault is not about sex. It is a **crime about power**, a way for the attacker to feel powerful and in control.

Being confused because of sexual abuse, or being threatened by an abuser, prevents many children from telling a parent or other adult. The less loyalty the child feels toward the abuser, the more likely the child is to report the abuse.

Sexual violence can happen **anywhere and to anyone!** Research shows that 90% of rape victims are at least acquainted with their attacker and nearly 7 out of 10 victims knew their attacker personally prior to the assault. (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2000)

## Concern for the Children



Depression



Hope for Change



Remember, regardless of what you do or don't do,  
*Sexual Assault/Rape is NEVER  
the survivor's/victim's fault!*

For more information about child sexual abuse or to make a report, contact the Child At Risk Hotline at **1-800-792-5200**.

For more information about sexual assault or rape, call our 24-hour Hotline (Voice/TTY) at **508-626-8686** or **1-800-593-1125**.

## Date Rape Drugs

Perpetrators sometimes drug their victims to lessen their resistance to the assault/rape. Because of the effects of the drug, the victim may be physically weakened, unable to refuse sex, and might not remember what happened. The drugs often have no color, smell, or taste and are easily added to drinks without the victim's knowledge.

Some drugs that are used for date rape are Rohypnol (Roofies), GHB (gamma-hydroxybutyric acid), Ketamine (Special K), Burundanga and Alcohol.

**Symptoms** of these drugs can include impaired motor skills, confusion, dizziness, lessened inhibitions, amnesia, lowered blood pressure, and muscle relaxation. Sleepiness, feeling of incapacitation, slurred speech, unconsciousness, hallucinations, feelings of being separated from the body, amnesia, and falling into a trance like state are also symptoms caused by these drugs.

**Side effects** of these drugs can include drowsiness, headaches, upset stomach, memory impairment, dizziness, nightmares, tremors, amnesia and/or dreamlike memories of the events.

If you suspect that you have been drugged, you should be driven to the hospital or call 911 for an ambulance. Request a urine test and/or blood test as soon as possible.

Remember, regardless of what you do or do not do,  
**Sexual Assault/Rape is NEVER the survivor's/victim's fault!**



dizziness, lessened inhibitions, amnesia

## If You Are Sexually Assaulted or Raped

As a survivor/victim of sexual assault or rape you have the right to:

- have an evidence collection kit – also called a “**rape kit**”, performed at the emergency room (ER) of your local hospital. The rape kit is **confidential** and **free** of charge (with exception to the cost of the ER visit and any medication prescribed).
- speak to a rape crisis **advocate** and, if you wish to, have the advocate stay with you for support during the examination.
- bring a trusted friend or family member for support.
- **report** the incident to the police.

During a rape kit examination, the nurse checks for external and internal injuries, treats or prevents any possible STI's (Sexually Transmitted Infections) and collects any potential evidence (including bodily fluids, DNA, debris from the crime scene, etc.) to be used if charges are filed.

If you wish to utilize the rape kit in prosecution, you need to **report the assault/rape to the police within 6 months** of the date of the rape kit examination. You do not have to report the assault to the police to receive the examination.

A rape kit examination can only be performed for evidence collection if the victim arrives at the ER within **5 days or 120 hours of the attack**. The same 120 hour time limit applies to prescriptions of emergency contraception. Treatment with prophylactic antibiotics (for STI prevention) and toxicology (drug) testing has a shorter time limit and needs to be performed within **72 hours** of the assault/rape.

After 120 hours, possible evidence may no longer be available, but you still have the right to:

- have a physical examination done to check for and treat injuries.
- report the sexual assault/rape to the police.
- speak to and see a rape crisis advocate for support.
- bring a trusted friend or family member for support.

**Remember – your body is the best source of evidence!**

Evidence is usually best preserved by getting to the hospital as soon as you can and by not eating, drinking, urinating, smoking, brushing hair or teeth, or changing clothes.

(continued next page)

## If You Are Sexually Assaulted or Raped

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Even if you have done all of these things, you can still go to the ER – there may still be forms of evidence that can be preserved. Sometimes clothes and shoes are taken as part of evidence, so remember to bring a change of clothes and shoes when you go to the ER. If you have changed your clothes prior to seeking help at the ER, try to bring the removed clothing in a paper (not plastic) bag, and place the undergarments in a separate paper bag.

All emergency rooms have the ability to perform a rape kit examination. If you wish for a **SANE** (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner) to be present, and you live in the greater Framingham area, please seek services at one of the following hospitals:

Newton Wellesley Hospital  
Harrington Memorial Hospital  
Worcester Medical Center  
UMASS Memorial Hospital

For contact information for these hospitals, see Resources.

All survivors/victims of sexual assault or rape have the right to report the crime to the police. Still, some people choose not to report the crime and their reasons for doing so vary. Shame, self-blame, embarrassment, fear or retaliation from the abuser/rapist, and fear of people's reactions are just some of the reasons people choose not to report. Also, many survivors/victims don't know that they have the right to report the assault/rape, or might worry about their immigration status, and/or may have experienced insensitivity by law enforcement or hospital officials.

Talking to a rape crisis advocate might help a survivor/victim to understand her/his rights and possibly gain confidence to file a report.

**If you choose to report** a sexual assault/rape, you must do so in the town the assault/rape occurred. If the assault/rape occurred out of state and you have returned home, or you are unsure of the location of the assault/rape, contact the state police for assistance.

If you would like to talk to a VAV advocate or have a VAV advocate accompany you to the emergency room or when filing a report, please call our 24-hour Hotline (Voice/TTY) at **508-626-8686** or **1-800-593-1125**.

## To Report a Crime

Report any crime to the **police** in the town where it occurred.

The **Victim Witness Advocate** at your local district court can help you report a crime, file for a restraining order, provide information about your rights as a survivor/victim, and explain the criminal justice system. They can also refer you to other helpful services/resources in your area – like a local rape crisis center.

In cases of rape, if/when the District Attorney's office chooses to prosecute, the sexual assault survivor/victim becomes a witness for the state, making it a criminal case. Witnesses do not need a lawyer. Someone from the District Attorney's office will prosecute the case free of charge.

An adult survivor/victim of sexual assault/rape has up to 15 years from the date of the incident to file criminal charges. A survivor/victim who is a minor (under the age of 18) at the time of the incident has 15 years from her/his 16th birthday to file criminal charges.



## Shame

### SELF-BLAME

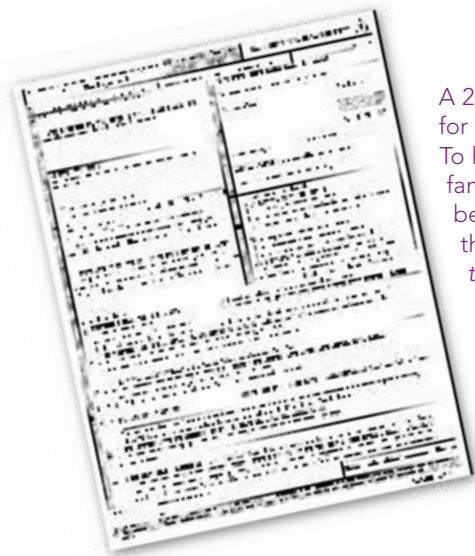
embarrassment, fear of retaliation from the abuser/rapist, and fear of people's reactions are just some of the reasons people choose not to report.

## Restraining Orders

You do not need a lawyer and there are no legal fees when filing for a 209A Abuse Protection Order (commonly referred to as a **restraining order** or a **protective order**).

Restraining orders can be filed during business hours (generally 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) at the district court or probate and family court with jurisdiction over the area where you currently live or where you lived before you left the abusive partner.

After business hours and when the courts are closed, an emergency restraining order can be filed at your local police station. The police will contact a judge who can issue a restraining order, which will be valid until the start of the next day of court operation. You will still have to appear in court. The time and place will be written in the order.



A 209A is a request for a civil order for protection from future abuse. To help protect yourself and your family you can request that there be *no abuse and no contact*; and that the defendant has to *leave the house*. You can also ask for *custody of your children and child support* as well as *no abuse of or contact with the children*, etc.

For more information or help with filing a restraining order contact the Victim Witness Advocate at your district court or our 24-hour Hotline (Voice/TTY) at **508-626-8686** or **1-800-593-1125**.

## Common Reactions to Victimization

Anxiety, anger, depression, guilt, shame, ambivalence, fear, as well as sleeplessness, stomachaches, headaches and nightmares are all common reactions to victimization – it doesn't mean you're going crazy! Sometimes these feelings and reactions are experienced separately, one after the other, or two or more at once. They may be expressed in different ways or at different stages following the victimization.

Other common reactions include:

### Emotional Reactions

- Terror
- Social withdrawal
- Emotional numbing
- Feelings of helplessness
- Memory loss of the event
- Flashbacks of the event

### Physical Reactions

- Stress related illness
- Sleep disturbances
- Nightmares
- Forgetfulness
- Inability to concentrate
- Irritability
- Mood Swings
- Hyperactivity or lack of energy
- Lowered immunity
- Appetite disturbances

One of the most important things for a family member or friend of a survivor to remember is to stay in touch. Reassure the survivor that you are there for her/him – no matter what. Listen to the survivor and believe her/him.

**Family and friends** can also help the victim by locating numbers for the local police, domestic/partner violence and sexual assault hotlines, hospital and court.

## Social Withdrawal

FEELINGS OF HELPLESSNESS



## 24-Hour Hotline Services

<b>Voices Against Violence</b> Metrowest Area Rape Crisis and Domestic/Partner Violence Center	Office 508-820-0834 Hotlines (Voice/TTY) 800-593-1125 508-626-8686
<b>Elder Abuse Hotline</b>	800-922-2275
<b>Disabled Persons Protection Commission</b> 24-hour Hotline to report abuse of disabled adults	800-426-9009
<b>Safelink</b> Statewide Domestic Violence Hotline	877-785-2020
<b>Llamanos</b> Spanish speaking Rape Crisis Hotline	800-223-5001
<b>Samaritans</b> 24-Hour Suicide Hotline	508-875-4500
<b>Child At Risk</b> Department of Social Services' 24-hour Hotline for information on and reporting about Child Abuse	800-792-5200

## Social Services

<b>Department of Transitional Assistance</b> Information about food stamps, cash assistance, emergency assistance, etc.	800-249-2007
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## Legal Services

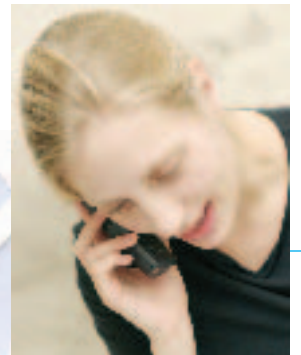
<b>South Middlesex Legal Services</b>	800-696-1501
<b>MA Office for Victim Assistance</b> Information on victim rights and services	617-727-5200
<b>MA Attorney General's Office</b> Information on victim compensation	617-727-2200 (TTY) 617-727-4765
For local District Courts in the Metrowest area call the <b>Middlesex District Attorney's Office</b>	617-679-6500

## Local Police in the Metrowest Area:

Ashland	508-881-1212	Milford	508-473-1113
Dover	508-785-1130	Natick	508-647-9500
Framingham	508-872-1212	Sherborn	508-653-2424
Holliston	508-429-1212	Southborough	508-485-2121
Hopkinton	508-497-3401	Stow	978-897-4545
Hudson	978-562-7122	Sudbury	978-443-2121
Marlborough	508-485-1212	Wayland	508-358-4721
Maynard	978-897-1011	Weston	781-893-4800

## Hospitals in the Metrowest Area

Metrowest Medical Centers	
Framingham Campus	508-383-1000 508-383-1100 (ER)
Natick Campus	508-650-7000 508-650-7400 (ER)
Newton Wellesley Hospital	617-243-6193 (ER/SANE site)
Harrington Memorial Hospital	508-765-3195 (ER/SANE site)
Worcester Medical Center	508-363-6025 (ER/SANE site)
UMASS Memorial Hospital	508-334-1000 (SANE site)



## My Personal Information

### SAFELINK notes:

Telephone number \_\_\_\_\_

I talked to \_\_\_\_\_

Other important information \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Local rape crisis/domestic violence center

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

I talked to \_\_\_\_\_

Appointment with \_\_\_\_\_

on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_

### Local Police

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

I talked to \_\_\_\_\_

Appointment with \_\_\_\_\_

on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_

### Department of Transitional Assistance

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

I talked to \_\_\_\_\_

Appointment with \_\_\_\_\_

on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_

### Department of Social Services

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

I talked to \_\_\_\_\_

Appointment with \_\_\_\_\_

on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_

### Court

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

I talked to \_\_\_\_\_

The Victim's Advocate is \_\_\_\_\_

Appointment with \_\_\_\_\_

on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_

### Upcoming court dates

<u>Date</u>	<u>What Court</u>	<u>Regarding</u>	<u>Who will come with me</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

### MA Office for Victim Assistance

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

I talked to \_\_\_\_\_

Appointment with \_\_\_\_\_

on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_

### MA Attorney General's Office

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

I talked to \_\_\_\_\_

Appointment with \_\_\_\_\_

on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_

Other important information \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# *Voices Against Violence*

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## FREE & CONFIDENTIAL SERVICES

**Our Services** include, but are not limited to:

- Crisis Intervention and 24-Hour Hotline (Voice/TTY)
- Spanish and Portuguese speaking staff available during office hours.
- Counseling and Support Groups
- Confidential Emergency Shelter/Safe Home
- Legal Advocacy
- Medical Advocacy
- Community Education and Outreach
- Women's Advocate Program
- Transition to Independent Living Program (TIL)
- Referrals to resources: schools, childcare, health and legal services, etc.
- Clothesline Project
- Lawyer for the Day Program
- Victim Advocacy Program

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