

What is sexual abuse or sexual exploitation of a spouse or partner?

Sexual abuse includes:

- sexual assault: forcing someone to participate in unwanted, unsafe, or degrading sexual activity
- sexual harassment: ridiculing another person to try to limit their sexuality
- sexual exploitation (such as forcing someone to look at pornography, forcing someone to participate in pornographic film-making, or forcing someone to engage in unwanted sexual activity with another person or other people)

Sexual abuse often is linked to physical abuse; they may occur together, or the sexual abuse may occur after an incident of physical abuse. It can result in the abused partner feeling degraded and worthless.

What is stalking?

Stalking is harassment of, or threatening another person. Stalking of an intimate partner can take place **during** the relationship, with intense monitoring of the partner's activities. Stalking can also take place **after** a partner or spouse has left the relationship. The stalker may wish to harm their partner as punishment for leaving. Whatever the reason, stalking can be extremely frightening for the victim. Stalking can take place at or near the victim's home, near or at their workplace, when the victim is driving, or on the Internet. Stalkers use a number of ways to frighten their victims such as:

- repeated phone calls, sometimes hanging up before saying anything
- following
- watching from a nearby hiding place
- suddenly showing up where the victim is, at home, school, or work
- sending emails; communicating in chat rooms or with instant messaging
- sending unwanted packages, gifts, cards, or letters
- Checking the victim's phone calls or computer
- contacting the victim's friends, family, co-workers, or neighbors to find out about the victim
- going through the victim's garbage
- threatening to hurt the victim or their family, friends, or pets
- damaging the victim's home, car, or other property

Stalking should always be considered dangerous and taken seriously. If someone is

- tracking you,
- contacting you when you do not wish to have contact,
- attempting to control you,
- frightening you,

then seek help immediately.

Call the Police or the Crisis Centre on 328-0922 for advice

Intimate Partner Abuse...

How to recognize the signs



The Crisis Centre
P.O.Box EE-17910
Nassau Bahamas

24-Hour Hotline: 328-0922
Family Violence Unit: 322-4999
Fax: 328-7824
email: bahamascrisiscentre@yahoo.com
www.bahamascrisiscentre.org

What is partner abuse?

Domestic abuse between spouses or intimate partners is when one person in a marital or relationship tries to control the other person. The perpetrator uses fear and intimidation and may threaten to use or actually use physical violence. Domestic abuse that includes physical violence is called domestic violence.

The victim of domestic abuse or domestic violence may be a man or a woman. Domestic abuse occurs in heterosexual marriages, as well as in same-sex partnerships.

The abuse may occur during a relationship, while the couple is separating, or after the relationship has ended.

Domestic abuse often develops from threats and verbal or emotional abuse to physical violence.

Domestic violence sometimes ends in murder.

Domestic abuse is intentionally trying to control the other person. The abuser uses verbal, nonverbal, or physical means to gain control over the other person.

Domestic violence includes:

- intimidation
- humiliating the other person
- physical injury

The abuse of alcohol or drugs is sometimes involved in acts of domestic violence but is never an excuse and is not the cause of intimate partner abuse.

If you are, or anyone you know, is being abused, please call the Crisis Centre on 328-0922 or Family Violence Unit on 322-4999

We offer free counseling for anyone who is experiencing any form of family violence or abuse.

What are the types of domestic abuse?

The types of domestic abuse are:

- physical abuse (domestic violence)
- verbal or nonverbal abuse (psychological abuse, emotional abuse or mental abuse)
- sexual abuse
- economic or financial abuse
- stalking

What is physical abuse of a spouse or partner?

Physical abuse is the use of physical force against another person in a way that results in injuring the person. Physical abuse ranges from physical restraint to murder.

Physical assault is a crime, whether it occurs inside or outside the family. The perpetrator can be charged for physically assaulting a partner or spouse.

Physical abuse includes:

- pushing, throwing, kicking, beating, slapping, grabbing, hitting, punching, tripping, bruising, choking, shaking,
- pinching, biting
- holding, restraining, refusing to allow the other to leave
- burning
- breaking bones, pushing down stairs
- assault with a weapon such as a knife, cutlass or gun
- murder

What is emotional or verbal abuse of a spouse or partner?

Mental, psychological, or emotional abuse can be verbal or nonverbal. Verbal or nonverbal abuse of a spouse or intimate partner consists of more subtle actions or behaviors than physical abuse. While physical abuse might seem worse as it is more obvious, the scars of verbal and emotional abuse are deep and can be more emotionally damaging than physical abuse.

Verbal or nonverbal abuse of a spouse or intimate partner may include:

- threats or intimidation to make the partner submissive and fearful
- destruction of the partner's personal property and possessions, or threats to cause damage
- violence to an object (such as a wall or piece of furniture) or pet, in the presence of the partner, as a way of instilling fear of further violence
- yelling or screaming
- name-calling
- constant harassment
- embarrassing, making fun of, or mocking the partner, either alone, in public, or in front of family or friends
- criticizing or minimizing the partner's accomplishments or goals
- telling the partner that they are worthless and could not manage alone
- excessive possessiveness, isolation from friends and family, checking up on partner to ensure they are at home or where they said they would be
- blaming the partner for how the abuser acts or feels
- saying hurtful things while under the influence of drugs or alcohol, and using the substance as an excuse to say the hurtful things
- making the partner feel that there is no way out of the relationship