
You Have Choices:

You can stay. Lesbians and gay men have many reasons for staying in violent or abusive relationships: fear of or feelings for the abuser; reluctance to use conventional services; or fear of the abuser outing them. If you choose to stay, information and support are available. Call the Nevada Statewide Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-500-1556.

You can leave. If you decide to leave, there are many resources for information and support. You should develop a safety plan that includes assistance from friends, family and others.

You can take legal action. Battering is a crime. You have legal choices. You can get the court to order the abuser to stop hurting you or your children through an Order of Protection Against Domestic Violence. You will need a lawyer.

You can get help. There are resources available for victims/survivors of gay and lesbian domestic violence. 24-hour crisis intervention lines can provide emergency help, information and support. There are also counseling programs that can help you sort out your feelings. Contact your local domestic violence program for services and/or referrals.

If you need help, please call:

National Domestic Violence Hotline

1-800-799-SAFE

1-800-799-7233

1-800-787-3224 (TDD)

Se habla Español

Program's phone
number in your area:

Breaking the Silence



***As a community we must
fight to end battering and
work to promote healthy,
respectful relationships.***



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Domestic Violence**
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The Facts...

The incident rate for violence in heterosexual relationships is the same as it is for gay men and lesbians. Studies show that one-quarter to one-third (25 - 33%) of gay men and lesbians have been in a physically violent relationship with a same-sex partner. Domestic violence has been described as the "third most severe health problem facing gay men today" behind HIV/AIDS and substance abuse.

What is Domestic Violence?

Domestic violence or battering is a pattern of intentional intimidation for the purpose of gaining or maintaining power and control over another. The abuse almost always escalates over time. Domestic violence can be any or all of the following:

- Emotional abuse: constant insults, put-downs; humiliation in front of friends/family; undermining self-esteem, etc.
- Sexual abuse: any non-consenting behavior, such as forcing or coercing sexual acts, refusing to practice safe sex, etc.
- Intimidation: threats of violence to children or pets, throwing objects, driving recklessly, etc.
- Physical abuse: hitting, choking, pushing, slapping, kicking, etc.

Exploring the Myths:

- Battering is **NOT** mutual.
- Battering is **NOT** a "lover's quarrel" or a fair fight.
- Batterers are **NOT** always bigger.
- Battering is **NOT** sadomasochism. SM must be consensual; battering is not agreed upon, nor is there a safe word to end the violence.
- Victims/survivors do **NOT** provoke the abuse nor enable the batterer. The batterer alone is responsible for his/her behavior.

If You are Being Abused, You Can...

...talk with a friend, relative or neighbor you trust. Talking with someone you know can be a first step in getting the help you need. Don't let anyone discount the violence you've experienced, whether it be physical or emotional.

...call a domestic violence hotline to talk confidentially about your situation. Although homophobia may be an issue, many programs are becoming safe for lesbians and gays. See the back of this brochure to find out about programs in your area.

...go to a hospital or doctor to check for injuries or call the police who may provide you temporary protection until you get to a safe place.

...obtain a protective court order that would prohibit the batterer from further abusing you.

Although some police, court personnel, medical service providers, and domestic violence programs may be homophobic and may not respond appropriately or adequately, others will be supportive. **Remember: it is crucial that you get out of danger!**

If You Know Someone Who is Being Physically or Emotionally Abused, You Can...

...let her/him know privately that you're aware of the abusive situation. Don't ignore it. Be there as a friend, and as a non-judgemental listener. Offer support, the space to express hurt, anger and fear, and allow her/him to make her/his own decisions.

...let her/him know that no one deserves to be beaten or abused.

...educate yourself about battering and about the options available for victims. For more information or resources, call the local program listed on the back of this brochure, or the Nevada Statewide Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-500-1556.

...let her/him know that resources are available, including emergency housing, counseling and legal assistance/information. Give her/him a copy of this brochure.