



1. Myth: If it's so bad, wouldn't they just leave?

FACT: There are many complicated reasons why it's difficult for a person to leave an abusive partner. They may be financially dependent or have limited job skills or religious, cultural or family pressures may keep them in the relationship/marriage. One of the most common reasons for a person not to leave an abusive relationship is fear. They may have tried to leave before and were stopped; Their abuser may have threatened to take the children from them, or harm them even more if they leave. Women who leave their abusers could be at a greater risk of being killed by the abuser than those who stay. For those planning to leave a violent relationship help is available. Call 911 and/or the Hubbard House 24-Hour Hotline at (904) 354-3114 or (800) 500-1119.

2. Myth: Domestic violence affects only a small percentage of the population and is rare.

FACT: National studies estimate that 3 to 4 million women are beaten each year by an intimate partner in our country. Domestic violence is the leading cause of injury to women between the ages of 15 and 44, and statistics show that a woman is beaten every nine to 15 seconds.

3. Myth: Domestic violence occurs only in poor, uneducated and minority families.

FACT: Domestic violence does not discriminate against age, gender, economic level or zip code. Studies of domestic violence consistently have found that battering occurs among all types of families, regardless of income, profession, region, ethnicity, educational level or race. However, the reason lower income victims and abusers are over-represented in calls to police, domestic violence shelters and social services may be due to a lack of other resources.

4. MYTH: All domestic violence is physical. Domestic violence is usually a one time, isolated occurrence.

FACT: Domestic Violence is a pattern of coercion and control that one person exerts over another. Domestic violence is not just one physical attack. It includes the repeated use of a number of tactics, including intimidation, threats, economic deprivation, isolation and psychological and sexual abuse. Physical violence is just one form of abuse utilized by batterers to maintain power and control over their spouse and/or partner.

5. Myth: Domestic violence usually only happens in married couples.

FACT: As many as one-third of all high school and college-age young people experience violence in an intimate or dating relationship. Physical abuse is equally as common among couples who are dating or married.

6. Myth: A person who is abused brings it upon their self by nagging or provoking their spouse/partner.

FACT: People are abused for reasons as ridiculous as: the dinner is cold; the laundry isn't done; the children are being loud; the TV was turned to the wrong channel. Abusive people refuse to control their violent impulses. Even where the person may have reason to be angry, they have no right to express their anger violently.

7. Myth: Children are not affected when one parent abuses the other.

FACT: Studies show that in 50-70% of cases in which a parent abuses another parent, the children are also physically abused. Children also suffer emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and developmental impairments as a result of witnessing domestic violence in the home. In addition, children who experience domestic violence in their homes often grow up to repeat the same behavioral patterns.

8. Myth: Batterers are mentally ill.

FACT: Battering is a learned behavior, not a mental illness. Abusers' experiences as children and the messages they get from society in general tell them that violence is an effective means to achieve power and control over their partners. Batterers should always be held accountable for their actions. There are programs available to help teach batterers how they can break the cycle of abuse. Call the Hubbard House First Step Batterers Intervention Program at (904) 354-0076 ext. 283 for more information.