



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: AN INTERVENTION CHECKSHEET FOR FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Helping the Victim

If you suspect that someone is being abused, be their support. Go up to them and strike a conversation. Talk to them about how you feel about the abuser treating them, and encourage them to do the same. Allow them to come to the realisation of being abused themselves rather than shoving the issue down their throats. You can tell them:[1]

- I'm afraid for you and your children.
- I don't think it's going to get better. It'll only get worse.
- We're here for you, whenever you decide you want to leave.
- You deserve better than this.
- Let's figure out a safety plan for you.

You don't have to use the above lines, but the most important thing is to remain supportive. Do not force them to leave, as then they'll stay with their abusers because you are treating them the same way their abusers are. Be non-judgmental and listen to them when they want to talk.

Community Involvement

Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence are not personal problems. They are society's. Together, we can eliminate this scourge. If you suspect someone is being abused, jump into action[2].

- Call the police if you suspect abuse.
- Take action and defend the victim, no matter who they are, be it your colleagues, friends, family or even neighbours.
- Don't be surprised if the victim defends her abuser. Be supportive instead and offer to lend her a friendly shoulder and ear.
- Encourage your neighbourhood watch, block association or your residents' association to keep an eye out for domestic abuse, just as they do for robberies and other crimes.
- Speak out publicly against Domestic Violence. Let them know that you're against it.
- Be informed and spread the word. Let everyone know what is domestic abuse and how to fight it.
- Getting Everyone Involved

Encourage your community to get involved by providing the following support to abuse victims:[3]

Crisis Intervention:

- crisis intervention services
- crisis hot lines
- shelters or other emergency residential facilities
- medical services
- transportation networks

Emotional Support:

- self-help support groups
- assertiveness training
- self-esteem and confidence-building sessions
- parenting skills courses



Advocacy and Legal Assistance:

- access to and custody of children
- property matters
- financial support
- restraining orders
- public assistance benefits
- help with immigration status

Other Supportive Services:

- housing and safe accommodations
- child care
- access to community services

Sources:

- *Adapted from Sarah Buel, Esq., in "Courts and Communities: Confronting Violence in the Family," Conference Highlights, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, 1994*
- *"Preventing Domestic Violence" by Laura Crites in Prevention Communique, March 1992, Crime Prevention Division, Department of the Attorney General, Hawaii*
- *The National Coalition Against Domestic Violence*
- *Adapted from Women's Aid Organisation Malaysia*
- *Iranian and Kurdish Women's Rights Organisation, United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Women's Aid UK*

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