

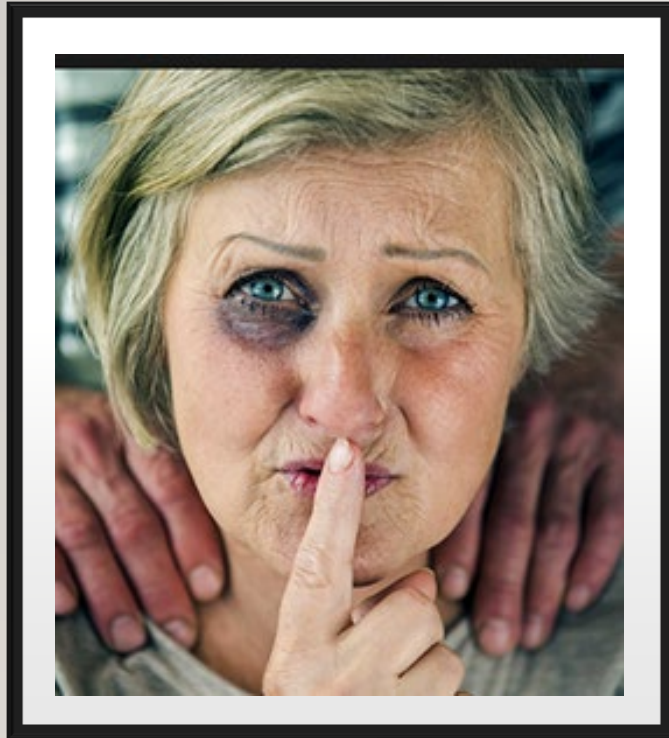
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

(1 OF 2)



- Women with disabilities had a 40% greater risk of violence than women without disabilities, and women with disabilities are at particular risk for severe violence.
- The most common perpetrators of violence against women with disabilities are their male partners.
- Approximately 48% of substantiated abuse cases of abuse involve elder adults who are not physically able to care for themselves.

* National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, "Domestic Violence and Disabilities."
All citations are footnoted in that publication.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

(2 OF 2)

- Studies estimate that between 70% and 85% of cases of abuse against adults with disabilities go unreported.
- Victims who have disabilities are often more vulnerable to threats by their abusers if they report the abuse.
- Crimes of violence against people with disabilities are statistically far less likely to be prosecuted, compared to crimes committed against people without disabilities.



National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, "Domestic Violence and Disabilities."
All citations are footnoted in that publication.

WHY DON'T MORE PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES REPORT ABUSE? (1 OF 2)



- May still love or care deeply about the abuser, creating mixed feelings about reporting the crimes, participating in prosecutions, and making changes to protect themselves.
- Often lack accessible services due to limited resources, or lack of transportation (especially in rural communities).
- May not have the skills or abilities necessary to act independently to seek help and may lack knowledge about how to access services. May not have the supports from others.

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, "Domestic Violence and Disabilities."

All citations are footnoted in that publication.

WHY DON'T MORE PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES REPORT ABUSE? (2 OF 2)

- Many victims of violence are heavily dependent on their abusive primary caretakers and run the risk of losing their caretaker if they report abuse.
- Victims may experience an increased risk of being institutionalized or losing their basic decision-making rights if they are viewed as unable to take care of themselves without the help of their abuser.
- Victims with disabilities may be at greater risk for losing child custody if they are viewed as being unable to care for children independently from an abusive primary caretaker.

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, "Domestic Violence and Disabilities."
All citations are footnoted in that publication.



COMMON FORMS OF ABUSE (1 OF 4)

- **Emotional abuse:** invalidating or deflating the victim's sense of self-worth and/or self-esteem. Emotional abuse often takes the form of constant criticism, name-calling, injuring the victim's relationship with his/her family, or interfering with the victim's abilities.
- **Economic abuse:** when the abuser makes or tries to make the victim financially reliant. Economic abusers often seek to maintain total control over financial resources, withhold the victim's access to funds, or prohibit the victim from going to school or work.



COMMON FORMS OF ABUSE (2 OF 4)

- **Physical abuse:** can include hitting, biting, slapping, battering, shoving, punching, pulling hair, burning, cutting, pinching, etc. Physical abuse also includes denying someone medical treatment and forcing drug/alcohol use on someone.
- **Sexual abuse:** when the abuser coerces or attempts to coerce the victim into having sexual contact or sexual behavior without the victim's consent. This often takes the form of marital rape, attacking sexual body parts, physical violence that is followed by forcing sex, sexually demeaning the victim, or even telling sexual jokes at the victim's expense.



COMMON FORMS OF ABUSE (3 OF 4)

- **Psychological abuse** involves the abuser invoking fear through intimidation; threatening to physically hurt himself/herself, the victim, the victim's family or friends, or the pets; destruction of property; injuring the pets; isolating the victim from loved ones; and prohibiting the victim from going to school or work.
- **Threats** to hit, injure, or use a weapon are a form of psychological abuse, but can also be criminal if the abuser has the ability to carry out the threat.

COMMON FORMS OF ABUSE (4 OF 4)

- **Stalking** can include following the victim, spying, watching, harassing, showing up at the victim's home or work, sending gifts, collecting information, making phone calls, leaving written messages, or appearing at a person's home or workplace.
 - These acts individually are typically legal, but any of these behaviors done continuously results in a stalking crime.
- **Cyberstalking** refers to online action or repeated emailing that inflicts substantial emotional distress in the recipient.

COMMON SIGNS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

- New or increased anxiety, depression, or reliance on drugs and alcohol.
- Seeming fearful with decreased self-esteem.
- Distancing or isolating by the victim and/or the abuser.
- Evidence of the abuser controlling the victim – constant texts or calls, needing to ask permission to engage in normal activities, restricted finances.
- Bruising or other injuries explained away as accidents.



WHAT CAN I DO? (1 OF 3)



- If your friend tells you they're in an abusive relationship, believe them. Direct them to resources they can use to get help, such as an intimate partner abuse hotline.
- Acknowledge their fears and the risk they're taking in confiding in you.
- If you believe abuse is occurring but the victim doesn't want to acknowledge it, respect their right to privacy and to refuse help.

* From Community Overcoming Relationship Abuse (CORA).

WHAT CAN I DO? (2 OF 3)



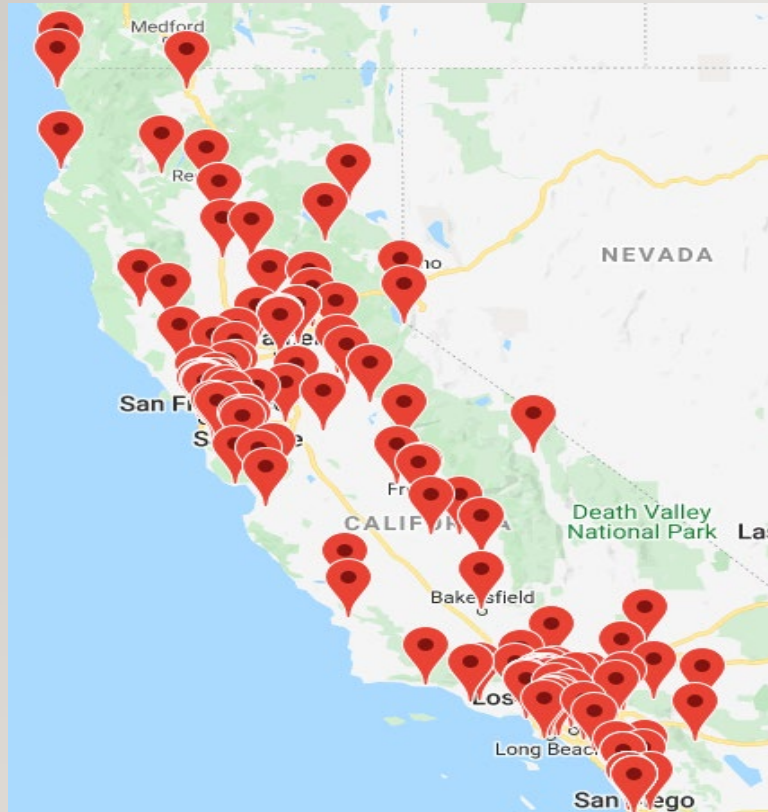
- Don't be judgmental. Don't force them to discuss the relationship if they're not ready.
- Don't tell them to simply leave the relationship. **Encourage them to get help to develop a safety plan and a safe means of escape.**
- And above all, don't encourage others to intervene with the abuser unless the victim asks for that assistance.

* From Community Overcoming Relationship Abuse (CORA).

WHAT CAN I DO? (3 OF 3)

- Reporting domestic violence does not have to involve law enforcement.
 - Most DV resource centers and shelters will provide assistance and resources outside the law enforcement process.
 - If a victim decides they want to report to law enforcement, advocates will be available to assist in navigating the process.
- Mandated reporters:
 - If you are a mandated reporter, **you must report the suspected abuse** to law enforcement.
 - Don't allow this hidden crime to remain behind a veil of silence.

RESOURCES – STATEWIDE LOCATOR MAP



- California Partnership to End Domestic Violence

<https://www.cpedv.org/domestic-violence-organizations-california>

RESOURCES – WOMENSLAW.ORG



The screenshot shows the WomensLaw.org website interface. At the top left is the logo with the tagline "Because knowledge is power." and "NNEDY". To the right are navigation buttons for "Español", "Email Hotline", "EXIT SITE", a search icon, and a "Menu" icon. Below the navigation is a "Back to U.S. map" button with a map icon. The main heading is "State Resources: California" with a "Print this page" icon. There are four resource sections: "Advocates and Shelters", "Finding a Lawyer", "Courthouse Locations", and "Sheriff Departments". Each section includes a brief description of the services provided. On the left side, there is an orange map of California and a dropdown menu currently set to "California". At the bottom left, there is a "PLACES THAT HELP" section with a sub-link for "Advocates and Shelters".

WomensLaw.org
Because knowledge is power.
NNEDY

ES Español Email Hotline EXIT SITE Search Menu

Back to U.S. map

State Resources: California

Print this page

Advocates and Shelters

Contact information for non-profit programs and domestic violence shelters where you can find advocates who provide support, safety planning, court accompaniment and more.

Finding a Lawyer

Contact information for legal assistance organizations that may provide free or low-cost attorneys and lawyer referral services for private attorneys in your state.

Courthouse Locations

Contact information for civil courthouses.

Sheriff Departments

Contact information for sheriff departments, which, in most states, serve protection orders.

California

PLACES THAT HELP

Advocates and Shelters

- WomensLaw.Org
- <https://www.womenslaw.org/find-help/ca>

MORE RESOURCES

- National Domestic Violence Hotline
 - 1-800-799-7233 (1-800-799-SAFE)
 - <http://www.thehotline.org/>
- California Courts Self-Help Center
 - <http://www.courts.ca.gov/selfhelp-domesticviolence.htm>
- California Department of Public Health
 - <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CCDPHP/DCDIC/SACB/Pages/DomesticViolenceIntimatePartnerViolence.aspx>

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN DV GETS REPORTED TO LAW ENFORCEMENT



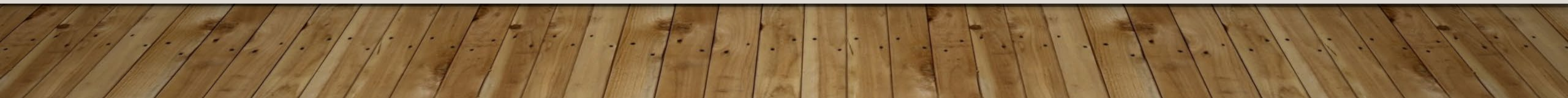
- In California, substantiated domestic violence reports typically lead to the primary aggressor being arrested or a report being submitted to the local District Attorney's (DA) Office for review and prosecution.
- Our domestic violence laws do not require the victim to “press charges.”
- Responding officers and deputies can request an Emergency Protective Order from a judge.
- If charges are filed by the DA's Office, a longer-term protective order would be put in place.
 - Restraining orders only work if the protected person uses them.

MATEO COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE'S APPROACH

- Cases involving violence against people with disabilities who qualify as “dependent adults” are handled by either our Domestic Violence Unit or our Elder & Dependent Adult Protection Unit
 - Each case is evaluated and assigned based on its fact pattern.
 - Vertically assigned prosecutors handle the cases from beginning to end.
 - Victim advocates who provide support and resources to victims & their families.
- Outreach to local law enforcement agencies
 - Consistent training for first responders to improve response to all incidents involving people with disabilities.
 - Reinforce available resources for first responders.

COLLABORATING WITH SERVICE PROVIDERS

- Our Adult Protective Services (APS) office provides outreach and training in the community on recognizing and reporting abuse of older and dependent adults.
- Developing relationships with our Regional Center to increase collaboration and improve responses of first responders to cases involving people with developmental disabilities who have those services.
- Quick Response Model
 - We work with social workers and public guardians to review cases in real time and develop collaborative approaches to victim safety and investigating criminal cases.



QUESTIONS?



THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

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