

How Domestic Violence Impacts the Victim / Survivor in Alaska Native Villages

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Definition of Domestic Violence

- Domestic Violence has many legal definitions but generally is any:
 - verbal,
 - emotional and mental,
 - physical or sexual behavior that is controlling, threatening or violent, against a spouse, partner or family member.

Domestic Violence Impacts the Victim in Many Ways

- Violence is about power – whether through words or actions, the abuse is meant to control or hurt another person.
- Its very common – chances are, someone you know in the village has been a victim of domestic violence.
- These effects can be serious – they can be:
 - Physical (bruises or broken bones)
 - Emotional (depression, low self-esteem)
 - Or even deadly.

Some community members and victims may come to view abuse as a normal part of life, but abuse is never normal.

Victims Experience Emotional & Verbal Abuse Which May Include

- Lies and broken promises.
- Keeping a person away from family, friends, or activities.
- Insults or Threats (name calling).
- Controlling a person/partner as in taking their income, how to dress, what to do, and what to buy.
- Jealousy not allowing male friends.
- Excessive blaming or telling them they are not worthy or good enough to be loved.

Domestic Violence Victims Experience Physical Abuse

- May include
 - Punching, kicking, shaking, slapping, or choking.
 - Attacking with a wood log, ax, spear or ice pick.
- Common Signs of Physical Abuse:
 - Bruises, cuts and scrapes on the face, neck, arms, and hands, broken or loose teeth, bite marks, cigarette burns.
- Abuse often follows a pattern
 - After the abuse, the abuser may make excuses or apologize. He or she may promise to stop and be extra nice but abuse usually happens again and gets worse over time.

Domestic Violence Victims Are Often Sexually Abused

- Sexual Abuse is rape or any other kind of unwanted sexual comment, advance, or contact.
- Common examples are:
 - Unwanted touching, forcing sex or sexual actions on the partner without permission, refusing to agree with the partner's request for safe sex, forcing the partner into sex with others, and exposing the partner to sexually transmitted diseases.
- You always have the right to say no to sex – this is true even if you've had sex before, and remember, you never "owe" anyone sex.

In a Healthy Relationship Both People:

- Trust and Respect each other.
- Are fair, open, and honest.
- Feel safe to share thoughts and ideas.
- Accept that even healthy relationships don't always work out.

If You or Someone You Love is Experiencing Domestic Violence, Don't Stay Silent

- Get help.
- Talk to a trusted friend.
- Go to your tribal office.
- Call the village police or state troopers.
- Get support from family & friends you trust.
- Make a safety plan that includes:
 - how you can leave the situation safely,
 - what you need to take with you like important papers, social security card and
 - where you can stay.

Thank you

Please let us know if you
have any questions.

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