



## God loves YOU!

*No personal relationship should be frightening. You should never feel threatened by your spouse, partner, boyfriend or girlfriend.*

*Everyone deserves to be in a safe relationship*

**You have a right to be in a safe relationship.** When one partner is abusive, violent or controlling towards the other it is wrong. It happens throughout our country to people of every race, financial status, and age group.

**The danger is real.** Every year over 1.5 million women and over 800,000 men are raped or physically abused by someone they love and many cases are never reported. If you are being abused, do not ignore the behavior. Do not think it will just go away. Do not think it is your fault. Get help. There is no excuse for abuse, and it is NEVER okay to abuse someone.

**What hurts you hurts your children.** If they see you getting hit, yelled at, pushed or shoved, they get hurt too. Teach them how to be strong and do the right thing by getting help now. Do not let your children grown up to think it is okay to hurt someone. Witnessing abuse and violence often leads to long term mental health problems such as substance abuse, child abuse and intimate partner violence.

### **Warning Signs:**

Does your partner ever hit, shove, slap or punch you?

Has your partner ever threatened to kill you?

Call you names?

Criticize things you say or do?

Hurt your pets?

Blame you for their outbursts?

Limit where you can go, who you can talk to?

Unexpectedly check up on you at work, church or at friends or family?

Force you to have sex?

Tell you it will never happen again?

If you answer yes to any of these questions you may be in an abusive relationship. You can get help, **YOU ARE NOT ALONE!**

### **What you can do:**

Seek the support of caring people such as friends, family, co-workers, church, and your doctor. Also, contact the numbers in this brochure.

If a friend is being abused:

Do not downplay domestic violence.

Do not judge your friends choices. They may feel helpless or that it is his or her fault.

Give emotional support.

Offer to help with childcare or transportation.

Express concern for his or her safety.

Tell your friend about the agencies that can help.

If children are in danger or being abused, do not be afraid to get involved! Contact the authorities.

If you are being abused:

- Have a safety plan to protect you, your children and pets.
- Be prepared in case you need to leave in a hurry.

1. Call 911 if you are in immediate danger.
2. Talk to a family member, loved one or someone you trust. Ask for help in case you need to leave.
3. Pack a bag that won't be missed and keep it with someone you trust or in a safe place.

-include some cash

- cloths and toiletries for you and your children
- medications
- spare house and car keys
- important phone numbers
- copies of important papers such as driver's license/picture ID, birth certificates, passports, health insurance information, house and car titles, marriage license and immunization records (if possible, keep in a safe deposit box in your name.)
- special toy or books for your children

4. Teach your children how to call 911.
5. Have a plan of a safe place to go.

### **Emergency Phone Numbers**

**911 for police, fire or ambulance**

**National Domestic Violence Hotline  
1-800-779-SAFE (7233)  
TTD 1-800-787-3224**

**Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network  
1-800-656-HOPE (4673)  
TTD (240)777-4815**

**AA County Sexual Assault Crisis Center  
410-222-7273**

**YWCA Domestic Violence Center 420-222-6800**

**The Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence  
1-800-MD-HELPS**

**Domestic Violence Pet Support Program 410-222-8900**

**If you are in Immediate Danger call 911**