

# Domestic violence is a problem

that you do not have to face alone.

Advocates from the Saint Paul

Domestic Abuse Intervention

Project can help you understand

how you can use the criminal

justice system to hold the abusive

person accountable for the abuse.

Project advocates can also lend

support and talk with you about

other resources available to help

you deal with the domestic

violence in your life.

We are here to help you regardless

of your age, ethnic and racial

background, sexual orientation, or

economic level. A Spanish

speaking advocate is available.

St Paul Domestic Abuse

Intervention Project

651-645-2824

Is battering ever life-threatening?

Yes. A woman is more likely to die at home

at the hands of her abuser than by any other

form of violence.

Am I to blame for the abuse?

No. The abusive person is always

responsible for the violence. It is that

person's attitudes, choices, and problems that

cause the cause.

Do battered women ever feel like they are

crazy?

Is alcohol and excessive drinking the cause of the battering behavior?

No. There is little support for the idea that

drinking or drug use causes physical abuse.

In fact, where it is a factor, it seems to be

used as an excuse for the abuse.

Do abusive people ever threaten to commit suicide?

Yes. Some abusive people threaten to

commit suicide, especially if they ~~see~~ that

the person they want to control wants to

leave. But abusers rarely do it. This is

another way you may be manipulated

through guilt to stay.

What are the effects of domestic violence on

children?

Whenever there is abuse or violence within a

family, everyone is affected. Sometimes the

physical scars heal more quickly than the

emotional ones. Children risk becoming

victims of the abusive person. They may also

become loners because they can't talk with

friends about the family secret or don't feel

free to have friends over. They may learn to

become violent as they grow older or

become battered because this is the type of

role modeling they saw at home.

Why do battered women stay in abusive relationships?

Battered women stay for many reasons.

Some feel

beaten, broken, and bloody woman is the picture that comes to mind when we hear the phrase battered woman. Actually, you can receive less severe abuse but still experience the fear, pain, and shame felt by a battered woman.

Assault, including domestic assault, is a crime in Minnesota. Many different abusive acts are against the law. While not all of the following examples of physical, sexual; and emotional abuse fall under the legal definition of assault, all of them do contribute to the fear, pain and shame that you can experience as a battered woman.

Forced you off the road or kept you from driving.  
Pulled your hair.  
Dragged you.  
Pulled your arms, legs, or other body parts.  
Ripped your clothing.  
Raped you.  
Threatened you with a weapon.  
Used a weapon on you.  
Hit or beat you with other objects.  
Stabbed you.  
Burned you

Sometimes these forms of physical abuse do not result in physical injury. However, the atmosphere of fear and violence these acts create is abusive and results in the emotional pain that accompanies physical abuse.

Withheld or made you beg for sexual affection.  
Made you strip when you did not want when you two were alone or when others were around.

## What is physical abuse?

You have been physically abused if another person has

Pushed and shoved you.  
Held you down and kept you from leaving or getting up.  
Bitten you.  
Kicked you.  
Choked you.  
Hit or punched you once, twice, or repeatedly, which may or may not have resulted in visible physical injury.  
Tied or otherwise physically restrained you.  
Thrown objects at you that may or may not have hit you.  
Locked you out of your house.  
Abandoned you in dangerous places.  
Refused to help you (for example, to get medical help) when you were sick, injured, or pregnant.  
Forced you or the children to ride in a car while that person drove dangerously.

## What is Sexual abuse?

You have been sexually abused if another person has

Told anti-women jokes or said bad things of a sexual nature about women.  
Treated women as sex objects.  
Acted like he or she owns you.  
Accused you of being sexual with others  
Insisted that you dress more sexually than you wanted or said bad things about how you dress.  
Said bad things about your body.  
Put down your feelings about sex.  
Criticized your sexual past; blamed you if you had been sexually abused in the past or as a child.  
Criticized you sexually (for example, called you frigid).  
Insisted on touching you sexually when you did not want to be touched either when you two were alone or when other people were around.  
Called you a whore or a slut