



## Safety Plan

- Always call 911 if you are in danger.
- Call the **YWCA 24-Hour Hotline at 707-546-1234** to discuss with a YWCA Advocate what you can do to prepare to leave, especially how to get your children and pets to a safe place before you leave.
- Keep an overnight bag packed with money, change of clothes and important documents (driver's license, Social Security card, birth certificates, bank account information, pink slip for your vehicle, immigration papers) for yourself and your children. Keep it in a secret place or at a friend's.
- When you leave, make certain your partner is at work or that your partner will be gone for at least two hours. It is always unsafe to tell your partner you are leaving and when.

If you or someone you know is being abused, or if you want to learn more about the YWCA's domestic violence services, call:

**YWCA 24-Hour Hotline**  
**707-546-1234**

**Se Habla Español**

Free, confidential information, support and services are available to all, regardless of gender, religion or beliefs, age, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, economic status or ability.

## YWCA Sonoma County

Founded in 1975

**24-Hour Hotline 707-546-1234**

**Administration 707-546-9922**

## Inviting Your Help

The YWCA's programs and services would not be possible without the support we receive from the community.

You can help the YWCA by:

- Your generous financial contributions.
- Volunteering as a member of the direct service team.
- Serving on a committee or the board of directors.
- Providing suggestions of ways the YWCA can increase its visibility and community impact.

Please call the YWCA Executive Director today at 707-546-9922 to talk about ways you can contribute.

### YWCA Sonoma County

Mailing: **PO Box 3506**

**Santa Rosa, CA 95402**

Street: **1421 Guerneville Road, Suite 200**

**Santa Rosa, CA 95403-7238**



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**recognizing  
the signs of  
domestic  
violence**



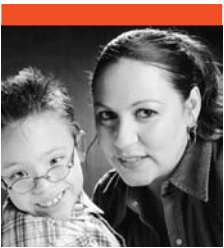
**eliminating racism  
empowering women**  
**ywca**  
**Sonoma County**

## What is Domestic Violence?

Domestic violence is threatening behavior that seeks to control and exercise power over another. This behavior can include one or all of the following:

- Emotional abuse
- Psychological abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Verbal abuse
- Physical abuse
- Financial abuse
- Threats of abuse or violence to children or pets

Domestic violence is never the fault of the victim. Abuse is always the responsibility and choice of the abuser. Violence is learned behavior, which can be unlearned with education, counseling and the will to make non-violent choices.



## Violence Affects Children

It is parents' responsibility to make certain their children are safe. Although parents often believe they can hide domestic violence from their children, even if children do not see a beating, they hear the screams, see the bruises or feel the fear.

Witnessing violence is stressful and it puts children of all ages at risk for long-term physical, mental health and behavioral problems. Children who grow up in a violent home are more likely to become abusers or victims of domestic violence as adults.

Many people stay in abusive relationships because of their children. Children need to be safe. Keeping children in a violent home teaches them the cycle of violence and patterns of behavior, values and attitudes that perpetuate the cycle of violence.

## Are You in an Abusive Relationship?

Does the person you love:

- Threaten to hurt you, your children or pets?
- Say it's your fault if she or he hits you, and then promise it won't happen again (but it does)?
- Put you down in front of others or keep you from doing things you want to do, including contacting family or friends?
- Make you feel like "there is no way out" of your relationship?
- Throw you down, push, hit, pinch, choke, kick or slap you?
- Force you to have sex when you don't want to?
- Treat you well in front of others but say degrading things to you in private?

Whether you are a woman or a man, and regardless of your economic status, educational background, age, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion or beliefs, just one "yes" answer to any of these questions means you are involved in an abusive relationship. If so, you are not alone and you have choices.

**No one deserves to be abused. You have the right to a safe, non-violent relationship.**

## Positive Dating & Intimate Relationships

These are the hallmarks for healthy dating and intimate relationships:

- Non-threatening behavior
- Honesty and personal accountability for one's actions
- Negotiating and fairness
- Communicating openly, truthfully and compassionately
- Making decisions together in a spirit of fairness
- Respect, understanding, being non-judgmental
- Trust in and support for one another



## Free Help is Available

The YWCA of Sonoma County offers the following services free of charge:

- **24 Hour Hotline** – Immediate assistance to those dealing with domestic violence and their friends or families.
- **Safe House and Emergency Shelter**  
A safe haven in a confidential location for victims of domestic violence and their children.
- **Counseling** – Individual therapy and peer support groups in Santa Rosa and Sonoma, in Spanish and English.
- **Legal Services** – Free assistance to obtain temporary restraining orders, court accompaniment and advocacy.
- **Information and Referral**
- **Preschool and Therapeutic Child Care**
- **Community Education and Outreach**  
Presentations for schools, churches, health care providers, service clubs and businesses.

The YWCA Domestic Violence Program also provides YWCA staff on-site to deliver domestic violence intervention, prevention and support services at the following partnership agencies:

Healdsburg Police Dept. – 431-3134  
Santa Rosa Police Dept. – 543-4044  
Sonoma Police Dept. – 565-8733  
Sonoma County Sheriff's Office – 565-7600  
Sonoma WORKS – 565-5661