

# Protecting Yourself From Physical Violence

## HEALTH GOAL

- I will practice strategies to help protect myself from physical violence and abuse.

A chance that is not worth taking is an **unnecessary risk**. You can avoid unnecessary risks that jeopardize your safety. Strategies that can protect people from violence are called **self-defense strategies**.

## What You'll Learn

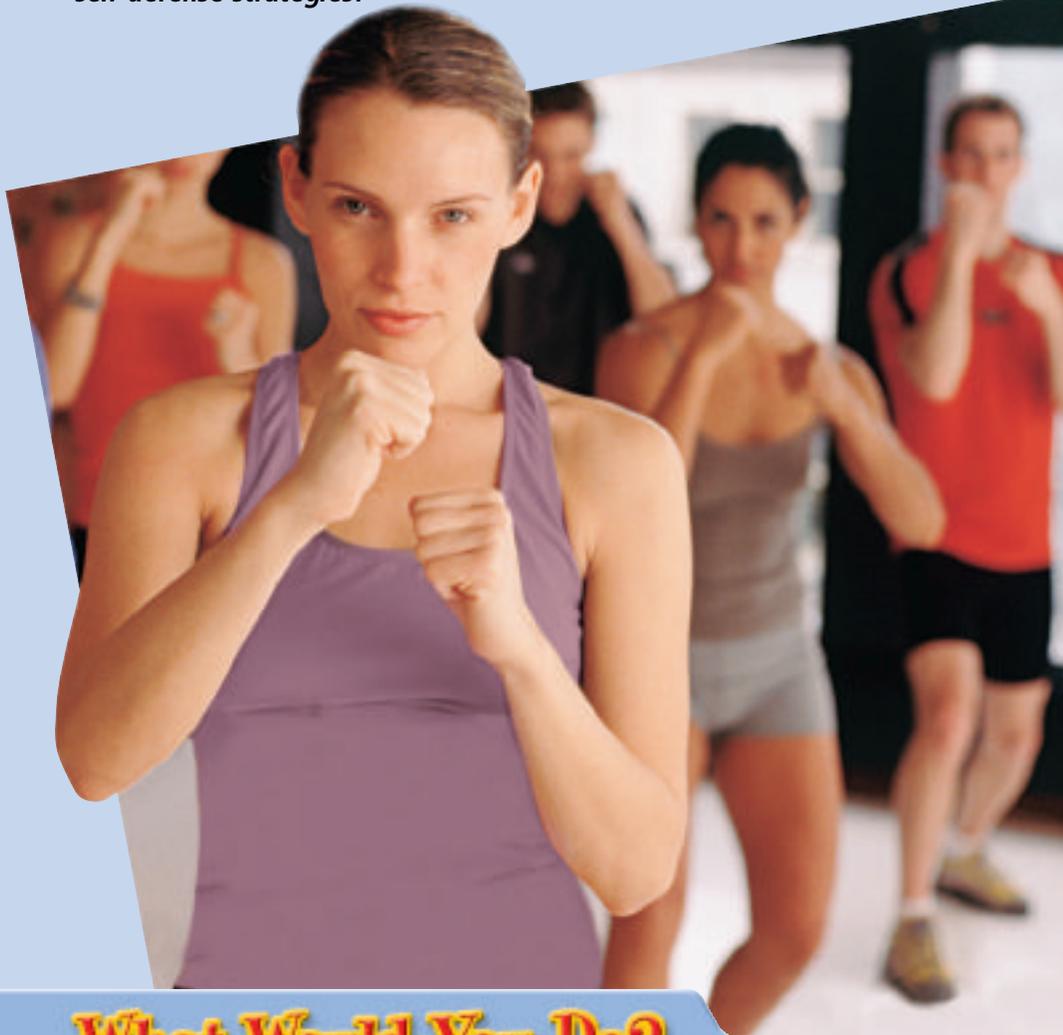
1. Discuss strategies of self-defense. (p. 671)
2. Explain hazing. (p. 675)
3. Discuss bullying. (p. 676)
4. Identify signs of child abuse and describe laws about mandatory reporting. (p. 678)
5. List six categories of mental and emotional abuse. (p. 679)
6. List the phases of a violent relationship and things that victims need to know. (p. 680)
7. Identify warning signs of dating violence and discuss defensive measures. (p. 682)
8. Identify how victims and perpetrators can facilitate recovery. (p. 683)

## Why It's Important

You want to live happily and free from harm. Learning self-defense strategies can help protect you from violence, emotional trauma, and death.

## Key Terms

- unnecessary risk
- self-defense strategies
- random violence
- awareness
- hazing
- bullying
- teasing
- battering
- protective order
- victim recovery



## What Would You Do?

**Writing About Self-Defense** Reading in the local newspaper about assaults in your community sometimes makes a friend of yours feel concerned about her personal safety. She is considering taking a self-defense class, but she is too shy to sign up. Read the information about self-defense on page 671 and then write a hypothetical e-mail to your friend in your health journal, telling her why it is important to learn self-defense strategies.



# Self-Defense



Violence over which a person has no control is **random violence**. A person may be a cashier in a store and be injured during a robbery. This person is a victim of random violence. Random violence is unsettling, because there is nothing victims can do to avoid the incident. But being aware of danger can prevent many acts of violence. This does not mean that you need to live in a state of fear, but you do need to be cautious.

## What to Know About Self-Defense

**Awareness** The first line of self-defense is to be aware of the people and situations around you. **Awareness** is your ability to “read” the people and situations around you. By being aware of your surroundings, many acts of random violence can be avoided.

Awareness is not being afraid or suspicious. Your degree of awareness should be determined by the situation you are in. You should be more aware when you are walking alone at night than when shopping in a mall with your friends.

The sooner you become aware of a threat, the more options you have to respond to it. If you see or sense that a situation may be dangerous, change your route and prepare to run or defend yourself.

**Defend yourself** Successful self-defense is not winning a fight; it is about avoiding it. If it is not possible to avoid a fight, try to defuse it. If you can’t defuse it, try to escape from it. If you can’t escape, you may have to fight your way out of the situation.

There is only one rule if you are attacked: you must survive. You need to do everything you can: scream, scratch, hit, kick, and/or attack with

a common object. Do everything you can to end the threat or to have enough time to escape.

**Tell an adult** A trusted adult needs to know if you suspect a person or situation is dangerous. He or she can talk with you about self-defense.

**Self-defense strategies** There are strategies you can use to reduce your risk of random violence. Trust yourself if you have a gut feeling that a person or situation may be dangerous. Avoid the person or situation whenever possible. It’s better to be safe and risk embarrassment, than to be in a situation that may be unsafe. Give up personal belongings rather than risk being harmed. If you are in danger and want help, yell “Call 911!” or say “Walk me to the store on the corner, I’m being followed.”

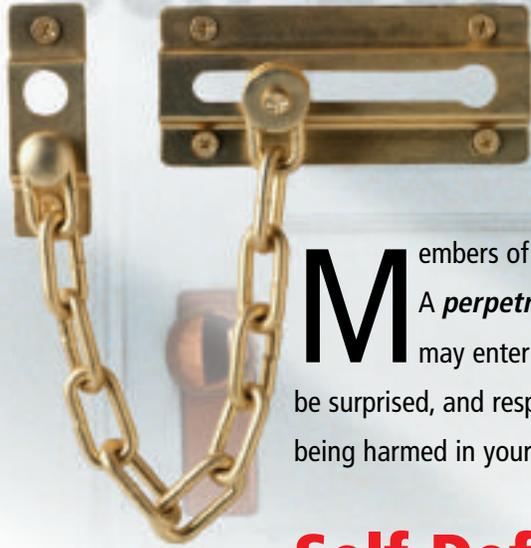
Know where you are going. Do not walk too close to buildings. Carry yourself with confidence. Have your keys ready when you approach your car or building. Do not label key chains with your name or address. Vary your routine. Drive or walk different routes every day. Do not talk about your plans where strangers can overhear you. Always carry a cell phone or enough change for a telephone call.

### Make the Connection

**Reduce Risk** For more information on protective factors for reducing the risk of violence, see page 659 in Lesson 63.



# Self-Defense at Home



**M**embers of your family must cooperate to keep your home safe from perpetrators. A *perpetrator of violence* is a person who commits a violent act. A perpetrator may enter your home intending to take possessions without intent to cause harm, be surprised, and respond by harming someone in your family. You can reduce the risk of being harmed in your home by practicing self-defense strategies.

## Self-Defense Strategies for the Home

### Did You Know?

**Burglaries** Over 60 percent of residential burglaries involved forcible entry. Over half of the burglaries occurred during daylight hours.

There are strategies you can use to reduce your risk of random violence in your home.

**Doors and windows** Have your keys ready before going to your door. Have good locks on doors and windows and keep them locked when you are home alone. Use wooden or metal rods to secure sliding doors and windows. Consider having a one-way viewer in your door. Do not hide or give your house key to anyone other than a trusted friend. If you lose a set of keys, have your locks changed as soon as possible. If your garage door opener is lost or stolen, have your opener code changed.

**Security** Consider having a home security alarm system installed. Have lights at all entrances. At night, leave one or more lights on. Keep hedges and bushes trimmed so that doors are visible to neighbors and passers-by.

**When away** Have your mail, newspaper delivery, and other services suspended when you leave for an

extended period of time. Ask a trusted neighbor to check your home and vary the position of the drapes while you are away.

**The phone** If you receive bothersome phone calls, do not talk. Hang up and report them to the telephone company and police. Keep a list of emergency phone numbers by the phone.

**Strangers** If you find a stranger or vehicle in your driveway or if there are signs that someone has entered your home, go to a safe place and call the police. Never let a stranger into your home. If someone asks to make an emergency phone call, offer to make the call while they wait outside if you want to do so. Ask to see photo-identification before allowing a repair person to enter your home. When speaking on the phone or answering the door, always give the impression someone else is in the home with you. Report any stranger who does not have identification to the police. Be cautious about giving out information about where you live.



# Self-Defense in Public

**Y**ou come from and go to many different places. You walk through the streets in your community. When you finish work, you may walk home or to a car. You may stop at an automated teller machine (ATM) to get some money from the bank.

Whenever you are in public places, other people might harm you. You can reduce the risk of being harmed in public places by practicing self-defense strategies.



## Self-Defense Strategies for Public Places

**The basics** Tell someone where you will be and what time you expect to be home, especially if you will be with someone you don't know well.

**Be aware of your surroundings.** Be cautious when using ATMs and do so during the day whenever possible. Use pay telephones only when they are in well-lighted places where there are many other people. Do not turn your back toward a street or a lobby when you are using a public telephone; turn your back toward the telephone.

**When walking** Wear comfortable shoes that allow you to run from trouble. When on the street, walk facing oncoming traffic; it will be harder for someone to abduct you. Vary your route if you routinely walk to and from school or work. Walk briskly with your head up and move in a confident manner. Carry your purse tucked under your elbow and hold it firmly with one hand.

Speed up, cross the street, turn around, run, or do whatever you feel is necessary if you suspect a person may be following you. Seek help in a nearby store or public place. Do not talk to strangers who approach you. Keep your distance if someone in a

car stops to ask you for directions. Ignore the person or call out directions to them.

**At night** Avoid walking alone at night or in high-risk areas. Stay on well-lighted streets and avoid deserted areas, alleys, and staircases. Carry a flashlight and use it to light up potentially dangerous areas. It also could be used as a weapon in an emergency. Wait only in safe and well-lighted areas for public transportation.

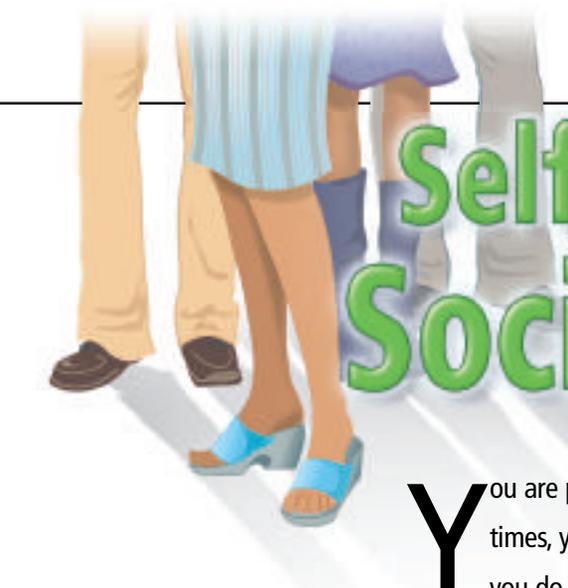
**Transportation** After boarding public transportation, stay with a group of people or sit near the driver, if possible. Know your bus schedule so that you do not have to wait any longer than necessary. When dropping someone off, be sure they are safely inside before driving away. Have them do the same for you. Never accept a ride from a stranger or someone you do not trust. Never pick up a hitchhiker.

**Defending yourself** Carry a loud whistle or buzzer to get attention if you need it. Yell, scream, or shout loudly for help if someone is bothering you in a public place. Consider carrying pepper spray.

### Mini-Review

1. Why is it important to walk facing oncoming traffic?
2. When using a bus for transportation, why should you know the schedule?





# Self-Defense in Social Situations

**Y**ou are probably often in many social situations. Sometimes you meet new people. Other times, you socialize with friends and other people you already know. When you socialize, you do not expect to be harmed, especially when you socialize with people you know, but you can still be at risk. Whenever you socialize, other people are in a position to harm you. You can reduce the risk of being harmed in social situations by practicing self-protection strategies.

## Self-Defense Strategies for Social Situations

**The basics** Trust your intuition. Signals of intuition include gut feelings, anxiety, doubt, hesitation, fear, and suspicion. Choose to be with other people when you socialize with someone for the first time. Stay away from places where you will be alone with someone you do not know well or do not trust. Do not go anywhere with a stranger, even if you are supposed to meet other people. Do not use alcohol or other drugs.

When socializing with someone for the first time, choose to be

▼ with other people.

**Expressing affection** Set limits for expressing affection and clearly communicate these limits to others. Do not pressure another person to drink alcohol or to express affection beyond their limits. A person who has been drinking is accountable for his or her sexual behavior. Be aware that some people consider sexual teasing or a seductive manner an invitation for sexual activity, even when it is not.

Ask the other person to tell you clearly what his or her limits are when you are confused or feel you are getting mixed messages. Do not assume you and another person want to express affection in the same ways or have the same limits. Use physical force to get away if someone continues sexual behavior after you have set clear limits.

Pay attention to the warning signs that indicate a person might try to harm you, such as a disrespectful attitude toward you, a dominating attitude, extreme jealousy, unnecessary physical roughness, and/or a history of violent and/or abusive behaviors.



# Hazing

**M**ost teens want to be a part of a group. Being a part of a group helps form a sense of identity and fulfills needs for belonging and friendship. Some groups require an initiation to become a member or to stay a part of a group. When groups use humiliation, ridicule, embarrassment, mental or physical discomfort, or dangerous activities to initiate a person into a group it is called hazing. **Hazing** is the physical and/or emotional abuse a person endures while trying to become or stay part of a group, regardless of that person's willingness to participate.

## What to Know About Hazing

Hazing is more than pranks; it is about power and control over others, which sets up the climate for abuse to occur. Hazing is dangerous and can easily get out of hand because some teens may be willing to do just about anything in order to belong to a group—even dangerous or illegal behavior. Some groups may force teens to steal, take drugs, or break other laws in order to belong to the group. Other groups verbally and/or emotionally abuse teens during hazing.

Teens have died or been injured during hazing incidents—in motor vehicle accidents or from falling, drowning, or being beaten. Some teens have died of alcohol poisoning after being forced to drink large quantities of alcohol during initiation ceremonies.

If you are being threatened by hazing, tell your parents or guardian, a coach, a counselor, a school administrator, or a law enforcement official what you have experienced.

If you are a member of a group, create ways to form bonds within your group that are not in any way humiliating, demeaning, or hurtful. Your group can institute community-building initiation activities, such as

playing recreational games together, participating in a ropes course, taking on a fundraising activity or a service project, or being a mentor for younger youth.

**Anti-hazing rules** Many schools have strict anti-hazing rules and written policies. Many schools take strong disciplinary action against members of a group in the case of hazing. Hazing is against the law in most states. Find out what your state law says about hazing and what the legal penalties are for violating antihazing laws.

### Did You Know?

**Hazing** A national survey of 1500 high school juniors and seniors, conducted by Alfred University in the year 2000, showed that almost half (48 percent) of the students had been subjected to some form of hazing.



◀ Group members should work to find ways to bond that do not involve hazing.



# Bullying

**M**ost teens have experienced what it feels like to be bullied. Three out of every four teens will be bullied during their school years. About one-third of teens say that they have been bullied three or more times in the past year. According to the National Crime Prevention Council, 60 percent of teens witness bullying at least once a day.

## What to Know About Bullying

Repeatedly doing or saying things to intimidate or dominate another person is called **bullying**. A bully is a person who hurts or frightens people who are perceived to be smaller or weaker. Bullying someone is violent behavior and it is wrong. No one has the right to hurt or intimidate others.

Bullying can be physical or verbal. Bullying may include: taunting, making fun of or isolating someone; name-calling; pushing, hitting, poking, pinching, hair-pulling, kicking, or other physical abuse; spreading rumors, telling lies, or setting someone up to get in trouble; taking

money or things from someone; making faces or obscene gestures at someone; excluding someone; pressuring someone to do something he or she doesn't want to do; and sexually harassing someone in any way.

**Teasing** Bullying is much different than teasing. **Teasing** is making fun of someone in a good-humored way. Teasing is usually done by someone who knows you well and cares about you. Teasing can turn into bullying if it becomes cruel, causes someone distress, or becomes one-sided and repeated.

### Characteristics of Bullies

Teens who bully others:

- need to feel powerful and in control. They enjoy the power that aggression brings. They feel entitled to recognition, privilege and special treatment.
- may have an inflated self-image. Those who bully often believe that they are superior to others and brag about it.
- receive satisfaction from inflicting injury and suffering on others. Bullies find pleasure in taunting or dominating another person, even if it is obvious that the victim is distressed.
- lack empathy or feeling of concern for their victims.
- often lie about their actions, saying that their victims provoked them in some way. Bullies often blame the victim for the abuse.
- often believe it is OK to bully others. It is common for them to rationalize their actions by thinking that the victim did something to deserve this treatment.
- often come from a home in which physical punishment is used. Some bullies have been abused at home or were bullied themselves.
- often are defiant toward adults and are likely to break school rules.
- can be boys or girls. Girls are more likely to bully with words while boys are more likely to resort to physical attacks. For this reason, bullying by girls is often ignored or not taken as seriously as bullying by boys. Both types of bullying are harmful and serious.
- are often popular and well-liked by their peers and teachers.

**Why bullying is harmful** It is obvious that victims of bullying can receive physical injury from their abuse. Victims of bullying also are fearful of being in places where they are subjected to bullying. The stress that results from this fear can lead to school absences, trouble sleeping at night, difficulty concentrating on schoolwork, depression, and other stress-related symptoms. Continually facing intimidation is tough on a person's self-esteem. Feeling helpless to stop harassment from bullies, victims may also see themselves as helpless in other areas of their lives. Some victims of bullying retaliate for the abuse in violent ways, including suicide and murder.

Teens who bully are at risk of criminal behavior. They often lack social skills needed to be successful in life. If they do not learn to improve their social skills, they will continue to have problems relating to others throughout their lives. Bullies are more likely to drop out of school, and may have difficulty keeping a job.

Peers of victims who are bullied are also affected by bullying. Students may not associate with a victim out of fear of also being bullied. They may fear reporting bullying out of fear of retaliation from bullies. Some who witness bullying experience feelings of guilt because they did not stand up to the bully or offer to help stop the abuse. Because of group pressure, students who witness bullying are sometimes drawn into the bullying behavior.

**Who is bullied?** Teens who are bullied tend to be quiet and shy, and they do not make assertive responses when someone bullies them. They

may lack friends and social support at school. They may not be confident in their physical abilities and strength. They tend to be smaller and physically weaker than peers.

Teens who are perceived as different are sometimes victims of bullying. Someone who is overweight or who has a speech impediment, a physical disability, or a learning disability is at an increased risk of being bullied. Sometimes being a member of a different religious faith or race incites incidents of bullying.

Teens who are bullied are usually younger than the bullies. They feel that nobody will help them or be able to stop the bullying, and they do not tell because they fear the bullying may become worse as a result.

**How to handle bullying** Sometimes bullying stops when a person takes actions to stop it. Bullies continue as long as it works, because it makes them feel powerful. Many bullies will stop if they know they do not threaten their victim.

Strategies to avoid becoming a victim of bullying include having confidence that you can deal with the bully in a peaceful way. Violence may put you at further risk of injury. Humor can often be used to defuse a tense situation. Be assertive. Stand up for your feelings and needs. Say “no” to a bully's demands. Look the bully in the eye. Tell the bully to stop threatening you. Walk away and ignore any further taunting. If you fear physical harm, find a teacher or move toward friends who can provide support. When bullying is persistent, get help from an adult. Telling an adult rarely makes the situation worse and may help both you and the bully.

### Make the Connection

#### Appropriate Action

For more information about being self-confident and assertive, see page 48 in Lesson 5.

### Health TEKS

**15C (covered on page 677):** Analyze ways to show disapproval of inconsiderate and disrespectful behavior.

#### Quick Quiz:

How can you appropriately demonstrate your disapproval of bullying?

# Child Abuse

The harmful treatment of a minor that can cause injury or psychological damage is called **child abuse**. Child abuse may involve physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect. As a result of investigations conducted by child protective services (CPS) agencies, approximately 879,000 children were found to have been victims of abuse or neglect in the year 2000.

## Did You Know?

**Child Abuse** An average of three children die each day in the U.S. as a result of child abuse or neglect. Children under the age of one make up almost one-half of child abuse and neglect deaths.

## What to Know About Child Abuse

It is important for you to keep in mind that most cases of child abuse occur behind closed doors and are not reported. The most common type of child abuse is neglect, which is followed by physical abuse and emotional abuse.

**Physical abuse** Maltreatment that harms the body is **physical abuse**. A student who is unusually bruised or burned might be suffering from physical abuse. Other signs that a child has been physically abused include bites, internal injuries, fractures, and abrasions on different body parts.

**Neglect** Maltreatment that involves the lack of proper care and guidance is **neglect**. A parent or guardian might not provide adequate supervision, food, shelter, clothing or medical care.

**Emotional abuse** Maltreatment that involves nonphysical assault, such as constant criticism, threats, rejection, and withholding love or guidance is **emotional abuse**. You will learn more about emotional abuse later in this lesson on page 679.

**Sexual abuse** Maltreatment that involves an adult, an adolescent, or an older child using power to involve a minor in inappropriate sexual activity is **sexual abuse**. There are

no age limits for victims of sexual abuse. Even infants can be abused. Sexual abuse includes activities such as fondling, intercourse, exhibitionism, and commercial exploitation through prostitution or the production of pornographic materials.

**Child abuse laws** There are laws in every state (and the District of Columbia) that identify mandatory reporters. A **mandatory reporter** is a person who is required by law to report suspected child abuse. Any person, however, may report incidents of child abuse or neglect. Mandatory reporters usually include professionals who work with children, such as health-care workers, mental-health professionals, teachers and other school personnel, law enforcement officials, and child care providers. In some states, any person who suspects child abuse is required to report it.

In most cases the identity of the person making the report of suspected child abuse remains confidential. Reports of child abuse are often made to child welfare agencies or to the police, and are usually investigated rapidly. If an investigation shows that a child is in danger, that child will likely be placed in protective custody or in a foster home.



# Mental and Emotional Abuse



**M**altreatment that involves nonphysical assault is called *mental and emotional abuse*. This type of abuse is the most difficult to identify because the effects are not as obvious as those of physical abuse.

## What to Know About Mental and Emotional Abuse

Mental and emotional abuse is dangerous to victims. A victim might have low self-esteem. Children who are emotionally abused are more likely to attempt suicide.

Mental and emotional abuse is about power and control. It can be found in any type of relationship, including parent-child, dating, marriage, employer-employee, peers, and teacher-student. Mental and emotional abuse includes the following abusive behaviors.

**Rejection** Refusing to acknowledge a person's presence, making a person feel inferior, or devaluing a person's thoughts and feelings is rejection.

**Degradation** Insulting, ridiculing, imitating, or diminishing the identity, dignity and self-worth of a person is degradation.

**Terrorization** Inducing fear, or threatening or placing a person in a dangerous environment is terrorization.

**Isolation** Restricting social contact, contact with family members, or limiting freedom within a person's environment is isolation.

**Corruption and exploitation** Training a person to accept illegal ideas or behaviors, using a person for advantage or profit, or training a person to serve the interests of the abuser is corruption and exploitation.

**Denying emotional responsiveness** Failing to provide care in a sensitive and responsive manner, being detached and uninvolved, or ignoring a person's mental health is denying a person emotional responsiveness.

### Signs of Mental and Emotional Abuse

A child who is being mentally or emotionally abused:

- is depressed or apathetic.
- experiences behavioral difficulties.
- withdraws from peers.
- is developmentally and/or mentally delayed.
- exhibits behaviors such as facial tics or rocking motions.
- reacts fearfully to authority.
- verbally reports that she or he is being emotionally abused.

# Domestic Violence

**A**buse used by one person in a relationship to control the other is **domestic violence**. Domestic violence takes many forms and can happen frequently or once in a while. Domestic violence occurs at all levels of society and in all communities.

## What to Know About Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is about power and control. Domestic violence can include: physical abuse, isolation from family or friends, emotional abuse, economic abuse by withholding money, intimidation, stalking, and/or sexual assault.

Victims of domestic violence become fearful, angry, and confused about what is happening. Escape may seem impossible.

Victims of domestic violence live in difficult circumstances. Since they usually live in the same home as the offender, they often face repeated and prolonged attacks. Relationships that exhibit signs of domestic violence go through the following three phases.

**Buildup or escalation phase** Frustration, anger, and tension build up inside the domestic violence offender. The offender becomes increasingly controlling and/or cruel. He or she sometimes uses alcohol and/or other drugs to deal with feelings. The victim often becomes submissive in an attempt to keep the offender calm.

**The acute battering (explosion) phase** This is the phase when abuse and battering occur. **Battering** is intentional, harmful touching of another person. The offender feels that battering “unloads” the tension that has built up. If the victim resists or fights

back, the offender may become even more violent. Following abuse, victims usually feel fearful, trapped, depressed, and helpless.

**Honeymoon phase** In this phase the offender has unloaded his or her tension and feels physical relief. The offender is usually ashamed of the violence and may express remorse. There is often apologizing, gift-giving, and/or pleading for forgiveness. The offender may even threaten to commit suicide if the victim leaves and/or promise to enter a treatment program. The victim often succumbs to these promises, believing that the offender will change. After a while, something triggers the cycle again.

**What victims of domestic violence need to know** The abuse is not the victim’s fault and the victim does not deserve it. Alcohol and/or drugs may be involved in the abuse, but they do not cause it. Waiting for offenders to change and trying harder to please them will not work. Abuse will get worse, not better. Victims should talk about the abuse with someone they trust. Victims should be aware of the emergency services available, and they should be prepared to use them when necessary. Children who learn violence at home are at risk of having violent relationships.

### Mini-Review

1. What are the three phases of relationships that exhibit domestic violence?
2. What healthy strategies can people use to help prevent and respond to the deliberate injuries that are part of domestic violence?



## Violence Against Women Act

**Domestic violence laws** Most domestic violence cases are handled by state and local authorities. State domestic violence laws prohibit physical abuse and threatened or attempted physical abuse. Most state laws also prohibit sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and even financial exploitation.

All states have laws that allow victims of domestic violence to obtain protective orders. A **protective order** is an order of the court issued by a judge to prohibit a domestic violence offender from committing further acts of violence, harassing or threatening the victim, and going near the victim's home or place of work.

Sometimes protective orders also require a domestic violence offender to pay for child support, spousal support, alternative housing of a victim, or compensation for damages caused by the violence. Sometimes a domestic violence offender is required by the protective order to attend counseling.

Protective orders are enforced by the police. Violation of a protective order is a criminal offense.

More states are strengthening laws that deal with domestic violence. Some states prohibit domestic violence offenders from owning or possessing guns. Some states require domestic violence training for law enforcement personnel, prosecutors, and judges, and medical and mental-health professionals. Some states order electronic monitoring of domestic violence offenders when they are released from custody. Some states are increasing funding for services and counseling for victims.

In 1994, the United States Congress passed the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). This act recognizes domestic violence by making certain actions federal offenses. For example, it became a federal crime for a person to cross state lines in an effort to continue to injure, harass, or intimidate an intimate partner. An *intimate partner* is defined by law as a spouse, a former spouse, people who share a child in common, or who cohabitate or have cohabitated. Under this law, if a violent crime is committed against an intimate partner that results in bodily harm, the penalty could result in a prison sentence of anywhere from 5 to 20 years, or a life sentence if the victim is killed. Another law in the act bans anyone facing a restraining order for domestic violence or who has already been convicted of a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence from possessing a firearm.

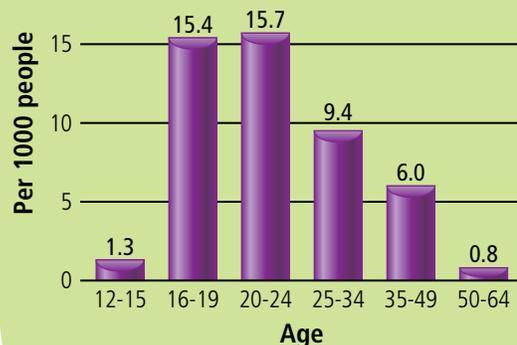
The law also allowed grants to be awarded to nonprofit organizations and local law enforcement agencies in order to strengthen the effectiveness of domestic violence prevention. Such grants included money for the establishment of the National Domestic Violence Hotline. Money was also given to local governments to increase community support and service programs for victims of domestic violence, including shelters for battered women.

A second Violence Against Women Act was passed in 2000 in an effort to strengthen and update domestic violence laws.



Visit [tx.healthmh.com/domestic\\_violence](http://tx.healthmh.com/domestic_violence) for more information about the prevention of domestic violence.

### Violence Against Women by Intimate Partner



Source: United States Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1999.

#### Analyzing Graphs

Study the graph at left and answer these questions:

1. Which age group is most likely to experience abuse?
2. Which age group is least likely to experience abuse?

# Dating Violence

**W**hen one person in a dating relationship uses physical, emotional, or sexual abuse to control the other person, it is called **dating violence**. Dating violence is more than just arguing and fighting.

## What to Know About Dating Violence

### Make the Connection

**Media** For more information about violence in the media, see page 558 in Lesson 52.

Dating violence occurs when one or both partners have not learned positive ways of solving problems and dealing with intense emotions.

**Warning signs** Dating violence can happen to males or females. There are signs that might indicate that a person is prone to dating violence. Teens should be aware of partners who are jealous and possessive and who try to control them by giving orders, not taking their opinions seriously, or making all decisions.

Partners who tell you where you can or cannot go or with whom you can or cannot talk may be prone to dating violence. Those who try to keep you away from your friends and family and who make your family and friends concerned about your well-being and safety may be prone to dating violence. Partners who use alcohol or other drugs or try to get you to use alcohol or other drugs are prone to dating violence. Also, those who are cruel to animals are prone to dating violence.

Men or women who abuse dating partners usually were abused as children, quickly lose their temper, find great enjoyment watching violent movies and/or playing violent video or computer games, and have very strict ideas about the roles of men and women in relationships.

If your partner seems to act differently around others than around you, has unpredictable mood swings, and frightens and threatens you, be aware that these are signs of dating violence. If your partner calls you names or tries to lower your self-esteem, says that you wouldn't be anything without him or her, says that no one else would ever go out with you, and puts you down, makes fun of, or embarrasses you in front of others, he or she is committing dating violence.

If your partner is physically abusive toward you, pressures you or is forceful for sex, thinks that physical abuse is romantic or sexy, has abused former dating partners, and blames his or her abusive behavior on you or others, your partner is committing dating violence.

**If dating violence occurs, or you suspect that it could occur** If you are a victim of dating violence, you might think that it is your fault, and you may feel as if you deserve the violence. This is not true. Dating violence is not your fault. No one deserves to be in a violent dating relationship. Do not ignore it and hope that it will go away. You need to get out of the relationship. Tell someone you trust and who can help. Do not spend time alone with the abuser.

# Recovery from Violence



A person who has been harmed by violence is a **victim of violence**. The emotional pain that follows violence often is deeper and lasts longer than the physical injuries. Victims of violence may need help to recover from violence, and perpetrators of violence need to change violent behavior.

## What to Know About Recovering From Violence

Victims of violence may experience different reactions after being harmed. Victims' responses may be influenced by the way they usually act or by the kind of violence they experienced. They may be highly emotional, depressed, and cry often. They may avoid others. They may neglect everyday tasks and have difficulty concentrating. They may have difficulty sleeping or have nightmares and flashbacks. They usually are very angry and afraid. They may try to numb their feelings with alcohol or drugs.

**Post traumatic stress disorder** Some victims are able to recover without help. However, most do not recover quickly or easily. **Post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)** is a condition in which a person mentally relives a stressful experience again and again. PTSD is common in people who have experienced violence. The signs of PTSD include sleep problems, irritability, and trouble concentrating. When something reminds them of the experience, they respond with much emotion.

**Secondary victimization** Victims often experience additional pain after the violence. **Secondary victimization** is hurtful treatment experienced by victims after they experience violence. For example, many victims must attend the trial of the perpetrator and may have to answer painful questions. Also, people may try to find fault with the victim's behavior. If they can find fault, they can convince themselves that this type of violence will never happen to them. Secondary victimization usually is not intentional.

**Victim recovery** A person's return to physical and emotional health after experiencing violence is **victim recovery**. Victim recovery may include treatment for physical injuries, treatment for emotional pain, support from family and friends, repayment for money or property losses, and/or education in self-protection skills. The purpose of recovery programs is to help victims survive the pain, heal, and move forward with self-confidence. Survivors of violence are resilient.

**Reasons for victim recovery** Victims may need a medical examination if they have experienced physical injuries. They may need blood tests to determine if they have become infected with any STDs. Victims also may need help with trust issues. To have close relationships, people must feel safe. Victims also may lack self-respect and allow others to harm them. Without help, they may continue to allow others to treat them with disrespect. Victims also may need to learn better ways to protect themselves. Victims who do not fully recover are at risk for behaving in violent ways. This is especially true if violence occurred in the family. Victims who were abused by parents or a guardian may grow up and be abusive parents themselves someday.

**Perpetrator recovery** People who behave in violent ways usually want to stop. Many believe they can't help it. They are wrong. A person can stop behaving in violent ways, but changing violent behavior is not easy. Violence is usually learned as a child, and it becomes ingrained when a person repeatedly uses it to deal with problems. But it also can be unlearned. It is

very important for children who are abused to receive treatment and counseling so they do not become abusive themselves.

Perpetrators of violence must want to change. Perpetrators must expect that change may only occur after a long period of time. Perpetrators need education and counseling in order to change. Being arrested, being barred by protective orders from seeing their victim(s), spending time in jail or prison, being placed on probation or a sexual offender list, and receiving clear messages from family, friends, and authorities help deter a person from using violence in the future.

There are signs that a perpetrator's behavior is changing. The person no longer blames others for his or her behaviors. The person does not do or say things that frighten others. The person respects others' feelings. The person's family and friends feel comfortable during time spent together. People feel safe around the person. The person does not attempt to control others. The person has received treatment for any alcohol or other drug use problems.

### Mini-Review

1. What strategies may be involved in victim recovery?
2. What are signs that a perpetrator is changing his or her behavior?

## Recovery and Intervention Programs

Recovery programs and intervention programs can be expected to be successful only if they help perpetrators:

- understand what is violent and abusive,
- understand why they are violent,
- learn to control their behavior,
- take responsibility for their behavior without blaming others or minimizing it,
- deal with their anger in non-threatening ways,
- recognize how tension and anger build up and learn how to appropriately deal with those emotions,
- deal with another person's anger,
- appropriately express their emotions,
- learn negotiation, conflict resolution, and listening skills so that they can build respectful relationships,
- learn about the cycle of violence,
- improve their self-esteem,
- improve their support systems,
- understand how alcohol and other drug use increases the chances of acting violently,
- learn appropriate alternatives to violence.

awareness  
battering  
bullying  
hazing  
neglect  
protective order  
random violence  
self-defense  
strategies  
teasing  
unnecessary risk  
victim recovery

## 🔑 Key Terms Review

Explain the relationship between the pairs of lesson Key Terms below. Do not write in this book.

1. random violence—self-defense strategies
2. awareness—unnecessary risk
3. battering—protective order
4. teasing—bullying
5. battering—hazing
6. random violence—unnecessary risk
7. victim recovery—self-defense strategies
8. bullying—hazing

## Recalling the Facts

9. Describe the types of child abuse.
10. What self-defense strategies should you use in social situations?
11. What “home” self-defense strategies should you use when you will be away?
12. Who is a mandatory reporter of child abuse?
13. What “home” self-defense strategies should you use with strangers?
14. Describe the causes and symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder.
15. What are the characteristics of a bully?
16. What self-defense strategies should you use when walking in public?
17. What are the signs of mental and emotional abuse in children?
18. Describe a person who is more likely than others to be bullied.

## Critical Thinking

19. Analyze ways to show disapproval of inconsiderate and disrespectful behavior, such as the behavior of bullies.
20. Examine the legal and ethical ramifications of hazing, bullying, and dating violence.
21. Discuss the categories of mental and emotional abuse.
22. Describe the phases of domestic violence. Explain why victims of domestic violence often stay with their abusers.

## Real-Life Applications

23. Discuss how the family and friends of victims of violence can help them recover.
24. In what setting do you think you are at highest risk for harm, and what defensive strategies can you use to protect yourself?
25. Discuss what actions you can take to help prevent and stop hazing and bullying in your social groups and at school.
26. Describe what you would do if you were a victim of dating violence.

## Activities

### Responsible Decision Making

27. **Write** A female friend has a part-time job as a babysitter for a family you know. She tells you that the father of the children for whom she babysits teases her in a sexual way. She says she is very uncomfortable with his teasing and that she feels unsafe around him, but she does not know what to do. Write a response to this situation. Refer to the Responsible Decision-Making Model on page 61 for help.

### Sharpen Your Life Skills

#### 28. Use Communication Skills

Interview a police officer about crime in your community. Before the interview, prepare ten questions, including questions about the type and frequency of violent or abusive acts. Ask questions about how young people can protect themselves and how they can report illegal actions they observe. Take notes on the police officer’s responses.

