

City of West Haven's Domestic Violence Resources

The U.S. Department of Justice defines domestic violence as "a pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner. Domestic violence can be physical, sexual, emotional, economic, or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. This includes any behaviors that intimidate, manipulate, humiliate, isolate, frighten, terrorize, coerce, threaten, blame, hurt, injure, or wound someone".

Raising awareness about domestic violence helps break the silence, reduce stigma, and connect survivors to the help they need. Support from the community can save lives, promote healing, and prevent future abuse. Whether you're experiencing abuse or supporting someone who is, knowing where to turn is critical.

If you seek help, know that your safety and privacy are our top priorities. Information shared through this page or with listed organizations is treated with the utmost confidentiality. If you are in danger, please use a safe device and consider clearing your browser history after visiting this page. **If you need immediate help, call 911.**

What is Domestic Violence?

Domestic violence isn't always physical. Abuse can take many forms, and all of them are harmful. Here are the most common types:

- **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse can involve actions such as hitting, slapping, shoving, grabbing, pinching, biting, and pulling hair. It also includes behaviors like refusing a partner access to medical care or coercing them into using alcohol or drugs.

- **Emotional Abuse**

Abuse can also take the form of undermining a person's self-worth or self-esteem. This may involve constant criticism, belittling their abilities, name-calling, or harming their relationship with their children.

- **Psychological Abuse**

Psychological abuse can involve a range of behaviors, including instilling fear through intimidation, threatening to harm oneself, a partner, children, or the partner's loved one, destroying property or pets, and isolating the partner from family, friends, school, or work.

- **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves pressuring or attempting to pressure someone into sexual activity without their consent. This can include but is not limited to marital rape, assaults targeting sexual parts of the body, forcing sexual acts following physical violence, or engaging in sexually degrading behavior toward the person.

- **Financial Abuse**

Economic abuse involves controlling or limiting a person's ability to obtain, use, or retain the financial resources they are entitled to. This can include using coercion, fraud, or manipulation to restrict access to money, assets, credit, or financial information. It may also involve unfairly using a person's financial resources, such as money or assets, or exerting undue influence over their financial decisions, including forcing defaults on shared financial obligations, exploiting powers of attorney or guardianship, or failing to act in the best interests of someone under a fiduciary duty.

- **Technological Abuse**

A behavior or pattern of actions designed to harm, threaten, control, stalk, harass, impersonate, exploit, extort, or monitor someone through technology. This can include but is not limited to internet-enabled devices, online platforms, computers, mobile devices, cameras, apps, location tracking tools, communication technologies, or any other emerging tech.

Domestic Violence affects EVERYONE

Domestic violence can affect anyone, regardless of their race, age, sexual orientation, religion, sex, or gender identity. It impacts the victims, their families, friends, coworkers, and the broader community. Children who witness domestic violence are particularly at risk, as it can lead to social and physical problems and may normalize violence, increasing the chances that they will become victims or abusers in the future.

Signs of Abuse

Abuse isn't always easy to recognize, especially when it happens gradually. Many survivors feel confused, ashamed, or afraid to speak out. If you or someone you know is experiencing any of the following signs, it could be a sign of abuse:

Emotional and Behavioral Signs

- Constant fear or anxiety around a partner
- Feeling isolated or cut off from friends and family

- Low self-esteem or feelings of worthlessness
- Walking on eggshells to avoid conflict
- Blaming themselves for their partner's behavior

Physical Signs

- Unexplained bruises, cuts, or injuries
- Frequent "accidents" or wearing clothing to hide injuries
- Fatigue or trouble sleeping
- Changes in eating habits

Relationship Red Flags

- A partner who is overly jealous or possessive
- Being monitored or stalked, including through phone or social media
- Having to ask permission to go out, see friends, or spend money
- A partner who insults, belittles, or threatens you regularly
- Being forced into sexual activity or feeling unsafe saying "no"

Financial or Legal Warning Signs

- Not having access to your own money or accounts
- Being pressured to quit a job or not allowed to work
- A partner opening credit cards or loans in your name without permission

Local Resources and Services

New Haven Family Centered Services - *Neighborhood Victim Advocacy Program*

The Neighborhood Victim Advocacy Program (NVAP) offers free, confidential support to individuals impacted by bullying, domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, and other crimes. The program helps victims understand their rights and explore available options, while also offering the crucial support needed to rebuild stability after experiencing trauma.

- Contact: 203-624-2600
- Website: [Neighborhood Victim Advocacy Program | Family Centered Services of CT](#)

BHcare - *Umbrella Center for Domestic Violence*

The Umbrella Center for Domestic Violence Services (UCDVS) provides services for victims and their children at two sites located in Shelton and New Haven. All services offered are free of

charge and confidential. Services support 170 different languages 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

- Contact:
 - UCDVS 24/7 Crisis Hotline numbers are (203) 736-9944 and (203) 789-8104.
 - Toll-free 1-888-774-2900
 - To schedule an appointment or reach office staff, please call (203) 780-2037 (Monday – Friday from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm)
- Website: [The Umbrella Center for Domestic Violence Services | BHcare](#)

Judicial Branch Office of Victim Services - *Office of Victim Services*

The Judicial Branch Office of Victim Services offers advocacy, programs, and services to help crime victims and survivors with the emotional, financial, and many other impacts of crime and to provide support through the criminal justice process.

- Contact: 1-800-822-8428
- Website: [OVS Victim Resources - CT Judicial Branch](#)

Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services – *Crisis Services*

- Mobile Crisis Services for Adults - provides 24/7 mental health support for individuals in crisis
 - Contact: 203-878-6365
- Crisis Services for Youth
 - Contact: 211
- Suicide and Crisis Lifeline
 - Contact: 988
- Access Line CT- 24/7 access to substance use treatment, including detox and transportation
 - Contact: 1-800-563-4086