

DATING VIOLENCE

The facts:

- One in 10 adolescents experience physical violence in their dating relationships. (Germanche, 1991).
- Jealousy & possessiveness is a sign that a person sees you as a possession. These are the most common warning signs of dating violence.
- Perpetrators believe they have the right to control their partners, & see the victim as less than equal to themselves.
- 30% of all women murdered in the U.S. are killed by their husbands or boyfriends (National Crime Victimization Survey, 1994).
- The victim has no control over, & is not responsible for, the abuser's actions!

Leaving an Abusive Relationship

Deciding to leave an abusive relationship is often one of the hardest decisions a woman has to make. Further, the period of time right after you make that decision may be the most dangerous as it relates to the abuser's reaction. The abuser often feels a loss of control & may go to any lengths to regain it. Please use the following information to keep yourself safe!!

- End the relationship over the phone where the abuse cannot hurt you.
- If possible, don't walk to school, work, etc. alone. You are safer when with other people. Change your walking or driving route so that it is not predictable.
- Lock the doors & windows in your home. When you are alone, do not let your abuser in no matter what he/she says.
- Consider getting a peace order through district court & follow the judge's order. If the abuser violates the order or if you feel you are in danger, call the police immediately.
- Take the abuser seriously if he/she threatens your life or the life of someone close to you. Abusers often have no understanding of the consequences of their actions.
- Alert as many people as possible to your situation. Let school officials, people at your workplace, friends, & family know you have left the abusive partner. You are most vulnerable in places like school or work where the abuser can easily find you. By letting others know you may be in danger you create a support system & ultimately improve your safety.
- Many abusers stalk partners who have left them. Keep records of all stalking behavior; save all letters, gifts, and answering machine messages; get the phone company to monitor the number of incoming calls from the abuser's number; keep a journal of "chance" encounters with the abuser & any other suspicious behavior.