

How to start the conversation

Seek out a private, quiet place to begin talking. Allow plenty of time to talk at length. You may be the first person that she has told about the abuse. Any of the following questions might help get the conversation started.

- You seem so unhappy. Do you want to talk about it? I'd like to listen and I'll keep it between us.
- I couldn't help but hear your argument last night, and I was worried about you. Are you okay? Were you hurt?
- What is it like at home for you?
- What happens when you and your partner disagree or argue?
- How does your partner handle things when he doesn't get his way?
- Are you ever scared of your partner? Does he threaten you?
- Does your partner ever follow you? Do you have to account to him for your time?
- Does your partner ever prevent you from doing things you want to do?
- Is your partner jealous, hard to please, irritable, demanding, or critical?
- Does your partner ever push you around or hit you?
- Does your partner ever put you down, call you names, yell at you, or punish you in any way?
- Does your partner ever make you have sex? Does he ever make you do sexual things that you don't like?

What do you do next?

Support

- Believe her.
- Acknowledge the courage she showed in talking to you. She has taken a risk in confiding in you.
- Let her know that you consider her feelings of fear, confusion, anger, sadness, guilt, numbness, helplessness, or hopelessness are reasonable and normal.
- Avoid treating her like a child or helpless victim.
- Respect her pace and be patient.
- Support the decisions she makes for herself.
- Help her make plans, but let her make the decisions.

Educate

- Educate yourself about the dynamics of domestic violence. Call your local sexual and domestic violence program for information about services available and basic information about domestic violence.
- Explain that domestic violence can be a crime and that she can seek protection from the criminal justice system.
- Explain that she and her children have a right to safety and happiness.
- Make sure she knows that she is not alone. Women from every ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic group suffer from abuse, and many find it difficult to leave.
- Emphasize that when she is ready, she can make a choice to leave the relationship and that there is help available.
- Provide her with information about local resources: the phone number of the local domestic violence hotline, support groups, counseling, shelter programs, and legal advocacy.

Act

- If she wants to go to an agency or sexual and domestic violence program, volunteer to go with her.
- If you see or hear an assault in progress, call the police. These assaults are often dangerous to outsiders; do not intervene yourself.
- She may need financial assistance, help finding a place to live, a place to store her belongings, or help in caring for pets. She may need assistance to escape. Decide if you feel comfortable helping her out in these ways.
- If she remains in the relationship, continue to be her friend while at the same time firmly communicating to her that she and her children do not deserve to be treated abusively.
- With her permission, enlist other friends, family or co-workers to help with child care or to go with her to court.

For support, contact:

The sexual and domestic violence program nearest you (see map)

Kansas Crisis Hotline

1-888-END-ABUSE
(1-888-363-2287)

National Domestic Violence Hotline

1-800-799-SAFE (1-800-799-7233)
1-800-787-3224 (TTY)

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HOW TO SUPPORT A VICTIM OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



**Kansas
Coalition**
against sexual &
domestic violence



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What is domestic violence?

Domestic violence (battering) is a pattern of abusive and coercive behavior used to gain dominance, power, and control over an intimate partner. It includes the use of illegal and legal behaviors and tactics that undermine the victim's sense of self, free will, and safety. Battering behavior can impact other family members and can be used in other family relationships.

Domestic violence crosses all class, race, lifestyle, and religious lines. The only clear distinction is gender. Most victims of domestic violence are women, and most perpetrators of domestic violence are men. According to the National Institute of Justice, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Bureau of Justice Statistics, women are at significantly greater risk of domestic violence than men. Many academic leaders have identified domestic violence as a major criminal justice, health care, and social issue.

Is someone you know a victim?

Do you suspect that a woman you know is being emotionally or physically abused? If you can answer yes to some of the following questions, it is likely that you are right.

- Do you see or hear about repeated bruises, broken bones, or other injuries?
- Does her partner criticize her in front of you or make "joking" remarks that belittle her?
- Is her partner overly jealous, "attentive," or demanding of her time?
- When you leave a message for her with her partner, does she get the message?
- Are you ever afraid of her partner?
- Does she refer to his bad moods, anger, temper, or short fuse?
- Does he ignore the children or abuse them emotionally, physically, or sexually?

- Have there been suicide or homicide attempts or threats in this family?
- Is her partner accusing her of having affairs with other people?
- Does her partner try to control her every move? Must she account for her time?
- Does she speak of her partner as though he is far more important than she is?
- Is she often late or absent from work, or has she quit her job altogether?
- Does she break appointments at the last minute or fail to show up?

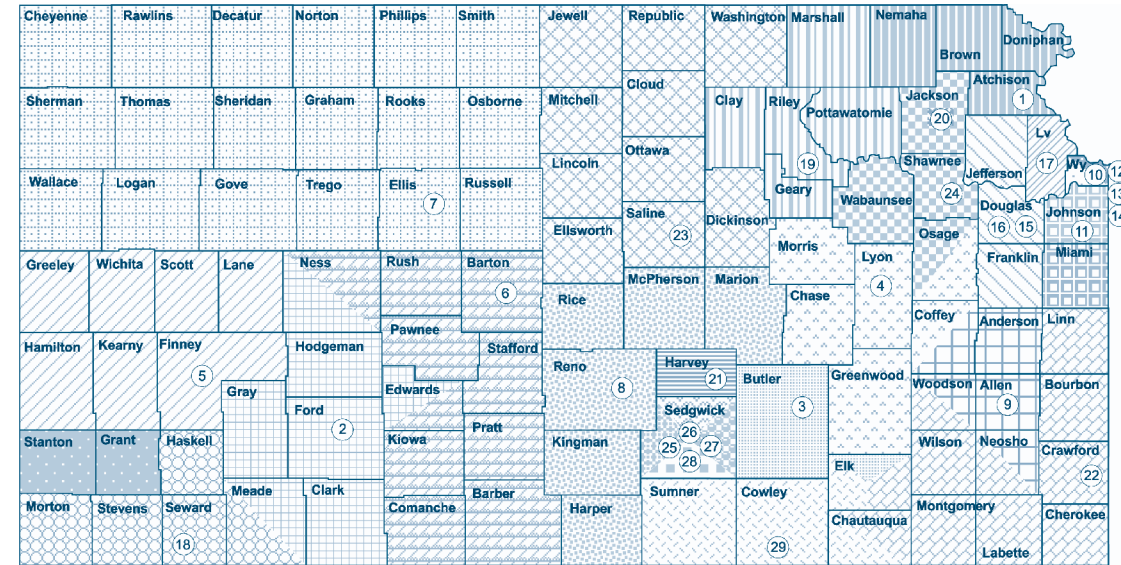
What do you say?

The hardest part about talking to a friend or family member who is a victim of domestic violence is getting started. You can help a woman by keeping her story confidential. While you might feel that it would be helpful to tell others about her situation, telling others can in fact put her and her children in serious danger. Additionally, while you may want to tell her to leave, leaving is often the most dangerous time in an abusive relationship. Consult your local sexual and domestic violence program for additional information on safety planning.

When she tells her story, listen attentively. Don't blame her for the abuse. Don't interrupt. Don't let your facial expression or body language convey doubt or judgment of what she is saying. Your support and belief in her may be critical in her safety and healing.

Remember: If she refuses to talk to you, she has her reasons. Express your concern for her anyway. Tell her that emotional, physical, and sexual abuse are wrong and that she deserves to be safe. Assure her that you will be ready to talk or help, if she asks.

Kansas Sexual and Domestic Violence Programs



CITY	SEXUAL AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAMS	CRISIS HOTLINE NUMBER
1. Atchison	DoVES	800-367-7075 or 913-367-0363
2. Dodge City	Crisis Center of Dodge City	866-270-2270 or 620-225-6510
3. El Dorado	Family Life Center of Butler County	800-870-6967 or 316-321-7104
4. Emporia	SOS, Inc.	800-825-1295 or 620-342-1870
5. Garden City	Family Crisis Services	800-275-0535 or 620-275-5911
6. Great Bend	Family Crisis Center	866-792-1885 or 620-792-1885
7. Hays	Northwest Kansas Domestic and Sexual Violence Services	800-794-4624 or 785-625-3055
8. Hutchinson	Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Center	800-701-3630 or 620-663-2522
9. Iola	Hope Unlimited	620-365-7566
KC Metro		
10. Wyandotte Cnty	Friends of Yates Della Gill/Joyce H. Williams Center (<i>domestic violence</i>)	913-321-0951
11. Johnson Cnty	Safehome (<i>domestic violence</i>)	888-432-4300 or 913-262-2868
12. MOCSA	Metropolitan Organization to Counter Sexual Assault (<i>sexual assault</i>)	913-642-0233 or 816-531-0233
13. El Centro	El Centro, Inc. ¡Si Se Puede! (<i>domestic violence</i>)	913-677-0100
14. KCAVP	Kansas City Anti-Violence Project (LGBT services)	816-561-0550
15. Lawrence	GaDuGi Safe Center (<i>sexual assault</i>)	785-841-2345
16. Lawrence	The Willow Domestic Violence Center (<i>domestic violence</i>)	800-770-3030 or 785-843-3333
17. Leavenworth	Alliance Against Family Violence	800-644-1441 or 913-682-9131
18. Liberal	Liberal Area Rape Crisis and DV Services	620-624-8818
19. Manhattan	The Crisis Center, Inc.	800-727-2785 or 785-539-2785
20. Mayetta	Prairie Band Potawatomi Family Violence Prevention Program	866-966-0173
21. Newton	Harvey County DV/SA Task Force	800-487-0510 or 316-283-0350
22. Pittsburg	Safehouse Crisis Center, Inc.	800-794-9148 or 620-231-8251
23. Salina	Domestic Violence Assoc. of Central Kansas	800-874-1499 or 785-827-5862
24. Topeka	YWCA Center for Safety and Empowerment	888-822-2983 or 785-354-7927
25. Wichita	Catholic Charities Harbor House (<i>domestic violence</i>)	866-899-5522 or 316-263-6000
26. Wichita	StepStone (<i>domestic violence</i>)	316-265-1611
27. Wichita	Wichita Area Sexual Assault Center (<i>sexual assault</i>)	316-263-3002
		o español: 316-263-2044
28. Wichita	YWCA Women's Crisis Center (<i>domestic violence</i>)	316-267-7233
29. Winfield	Safe Homes, Inc.	800-794-7672 or 620-221-4357