

## How to start the conversation

Seek out a private, quiet place to begin talking. Allow plenty of time to talk. 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 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 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. People 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 a 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 and safe helping her out in these ways.
- If she remains in the relationship, continue to be her friend while at the same time 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 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)

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# HOW TO SUPPORT A VICTIM OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

 **Kansas  
Coalition**  
against sexual &  
domestic violence

[kcsdv.org](http://kcsdv.org)  
[facebook.com/kcsdv](https://facebook.com/kcsdv)

## 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. 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. However, anyone can be a victim of domestic violence. Domestic violence is the leading cause of injury to women between the ages of 15-44 years. Approximately 1 in 4 women in the U.S. have experienced severe physical violence by an intimate partner at some point in their lifetime. 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 someone 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?
- Has her partner made any suicidal or homicidal threats or attempts?
- 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?

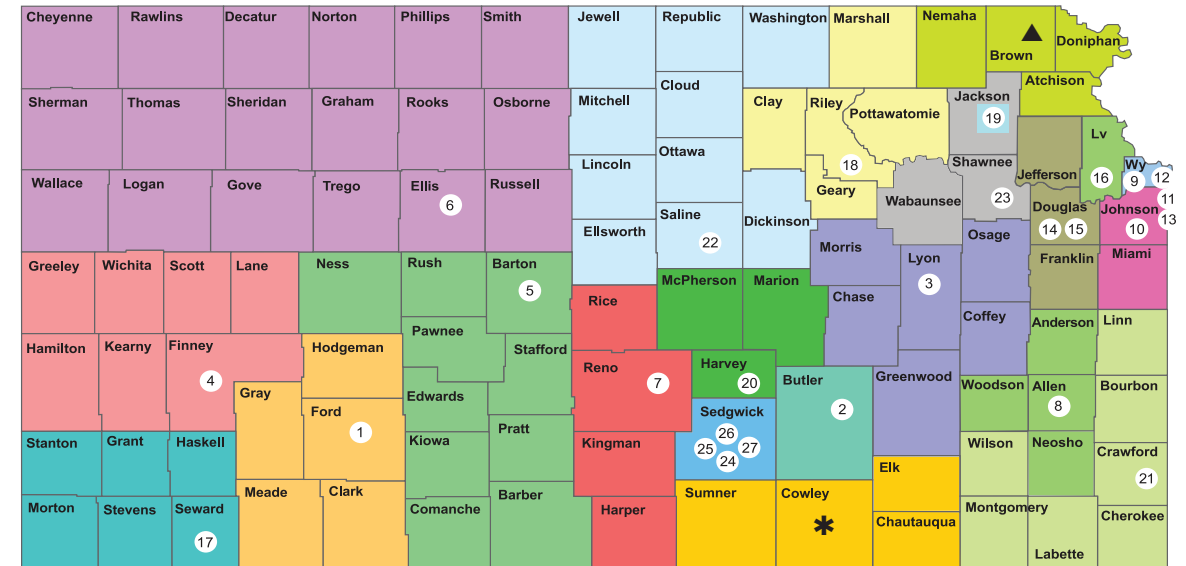
## What do you say?

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 victim by keeping their story confidential. While you might feel that it would be helpful to tell others about the 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. Contact your local 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. Dodge City	Crisis Center of Dodge City	866-270-2270 or 620-225-6510
2. El Dorado	Family Life Center of Butler County	800-870-6967 or 316-321-7104
3. Emporia	SOS, Inc.	800-825-1295 or 620-342-1870
4. Garden City	Family Crisis Services	620-275-5911
5. Great Bend	Family Crisis Center, Inc.	866-792-1885 or 620-792-1885
6. Hays	Options: Domestic and Sexual Violence Services, Inc.	800-794-4624 or 785-625-3055
7. Hutchinson	Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Center	800-701-3630 or 620-663-2522
8. Iola	Hope Unlimited	620-365-7566
9. Wyandotte Cnty	Friends of Yates Della Gill/Joyce H. Williams Center ( <i>domestic violence</i> )	913-321-0951
10. Johnson Cnty	SAFEHOME ( <i>domestic violence</i> )	888-432-4300 or 913-262-2868
11. MOCSA	Metropolitan Organization to Counter Sexual Assault ( <i>sexual assault</i> )	913-642-0233 or 816-531-0233
12. Mattie Rhodes	Mattie Rhodes Center ¡Si Se Puede! ( <i>domestic violence</i> )	816-241-3780 (not a crisis line)
13. KCAVP	Kansas City Anti-Violence Project ( <i>LGBT services</i> )	816-561-0550
14. Lawrence	The Sexual Trauma and Abuse Care Center ( <i>sexual assault</i> )	785-843-8985
15. Lawrence	The Willow Domestic Violence Center ( <i>domestic violence</i> )	800-770-3030 or 785-843-3333
16. Leavenworth	Alliance Against Family Violence	800-644-1441 or 913-682-9131
17. Liberal	LARC/DVS, Inc.	620-624-8818
18. Manhattan	The Crisis Center, Inc.	800-727-2785 or 785-539-2785
19. Mayetta	Prairie Band Potawatomi Family Violence Prevention Program	866-966-0173
20. Newton	Safehope, Inc.	800-487-0510 or 316-283-0350
21. Pittsburg	Safehouse Crisis Center, Inc.	800-794-9148 or 620-231-8251
22. Salina	Domestic Violence Assoc. of Central Kansas	800-874-1499 or 785-827-5862
23. Topeka	YWCA Center for Safety and Empowerment	888-822-2983 or 785-354-7927
24. Wichita	Catholic Charities Harbor House ( <i>domestic violence</i> )	866-899-5522 or 316-263-6000
25. Wichita	StepStone ( <i>domestic violence</i> )	316-265-1611
26. Wichita	Wichita Area Sexual Assault Center ( <i>sexual assault</i> )	877-927-2248 or 316-263-3002
27. Wichita	Wichita Family Crisis Center ( <i>domestic violence</i> )	316-267-7233
▲	No accredited services in this area. If you are in need of advocacy services in Atchison, Brown, Nemaha, and Doniphan counties, call the surrounding advocacy programs or the 24/7 Kansas Crisis Hotline at 1-888-363-2287.	
*	No accredited services in this area. If you are in need of advocacy services in Cowley, Chautauqua, Elk, and Sumner counties, call the surrounding advocacy programs or the 24/7 Kansas Crisis Hotline at 1-888-363-2287.	