

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE  
By Faith Martin

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Did you know that three in ten women and one in ten men in the U.S. have experienced rape, abuse, and/or stalking? Well, on average, 24 people per minute are victims of rape, physical abuse, or stalking by an intimate partner in the U.S. This means that more than 12 million men and women experience this over the course of a year. Additionally, 15% of women and four percent of men have been injured as a result of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV).

According to The National Domestic Violence Hotline, children witness violence in 22% of Intimate Partner Violence cases filed in state courts. IPV alone affects more than 12 million people per year. Children who witness violence at home are known to have emotional and behavioral disturbances. Children experience isolating themselves, low self esteem, nightmares, blaming themselves, and aggression against friends, family members, and things they own. A quote from [www.nctsn.com](http://www.nctsn.com) says, "Domestic violence poses a serious threat to children's emotional, psychological, and physical well being, particularly if the violence is chronic." 30 to 60% of perpetrators of IPV also abuse children in the household. Also, children who are abused themselves may not be able to express their feelings safely, and as a result, may develop difficulties talking about their emotions. As adults, they may continue to struggle with their feelings, which can lead to depression or anxiety. This also affects children because if they witness the violence, they are more likely to create it themselves.

In addition, domestic violence is violent or aggressive behavior within the home, typically involving the violent abuse of a spouse or partner. Both genders can be victims of domestic abuse. According to [www.clarkprosecutor.org](http://www.clarkprosecutor.org), one reason men do not report their experiences is because they are afraid that no one will believe them or take them seriously. Some men who do try to reach help find that they are mocked and ridiculed.

One in four women (35.6%) and one in seven men (28.5%) in the U.S. have experienced rape, physical abuse and/or stalking by an intimate partner in their lifetime. Therefore, men should speak out about their experience as victims of abuse. Perhaps domestic violence would no longer be perceived as just only a women's issue.

In my opinion, both genders should be equally recognized and taken seriously. Domestic violence causes a lot of damage to families, relationships, to children's mental health and much more. Men are not always the abusers. Men get abused way more often than statistics show between men and women. We should all be aware of both gender abuse. Some websites say men are afraid to report because as “real men” they are supposed to be able to “control” their wives or spouses that are abusing them. However, some men who do try to reach help found out that 64% of hotlines only helped women and were referred to programs for males who commit domestic violence crimes.

Finally, noticing and acknowledging the signs of an abusive relationship is one of the first ways to put an end to it. No one should have to live in fear of the person they love. It is important to make sure we do not create this for future generations to live in. Domestic violence is harmful to people living through it and/or growing up in an abusive environment. Furthermore, abuse has a serious impact on the way a person thinks and interacts with the world around him or her. We should all be concerned and aware of this. If you or a friend is in an abusive relationship please contact the domestic violence hotline 1-800-799-SAFE (7233).