



# Domestic Violence: A Cry for Survivorship!

October is a month known for Health Literacy, Breast Cancer, Youth Sports, HIV/AIDS, depression and mental health, even Construction Trades ... but it is a time to Honor Domestic Violence Survivors and pause to remember those who died in a moment of victimization.

First and foremost, there is help! You, the abused, are NOT to blame! Please, let someone know! The National Hotline is: 1-800-799-7233; or text “START” to 88788! This is a 24/7 hotline equipped with English, Spanish and 200 other languages assisted by interpretive devices.

This is not “your fault!” You are worthy of Love! You do Not deserve to be hit, for any “reason.” And, there are those that care, that do not even know you!

Since 1981, when the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence declared a “Day of Unity” to bring about awareness of a criminal act of violence against untold (and unreported) numbers of innocents.

In 1987, the first official “Domestic Violence Awareness Month” was observed, according to [www.aurora.umn.edu](http://www.aurora.umn.edu).

The [www.alexandrahouse.org](http://www.alexandrahouse.org) reminds us that “...domestic violence... is a profound and pervasive social and public health crisis, crossing lines of class, race, ethnicity, and sexuality.”

This year, Purple Thursday is on October 19. Please wear Purple to show your support of the Survivors of this dangerous and mentally devastating violent act. Purple is to raise awareness of signs of abuse; honor Survivors of Violence; remember the ones who lost their life to violent acts; and, advocate for change in laws that protect abusers, dismiss verbal and emotional abuse, and end stalking of all kinds.

Signs of domestic violence that may go unnoticed are: making excuses for “missing family/friend gatherings” usually attended; long sleeves, or make-up one usually doesn’t wear or wears out of season; uncertainty, when one used to be self-confident and able to make spur-of-the-moment decisions; asking people to “not come around” at certain times because their partner needs “alone” time; bruises that are inconspicuous or placed where usually covered with clothing; bruises or redness on the upper arms, or neck (evidence of being restrained); lack of money to do or buy things previously enjoyed; lack of transportation or selling a vehicle once valued; unable to join in conversations, especially when the abuser is around. There are many others and can be overlooked as seemingly “ordinary” personal choices or sacrifices for the “relationship.”

Danger signs become more prevalent with both time and with being unnoticed. Even when the abuse victim denies there is a problem, be persistent! Be around! Be Their Friend! Especially be their friend while they are absent.

The slogan for Domestic Violence Awareness Month is #EveryIKnowsSome1. And we do. Males, females and children of both sexes are victims of domestic violence every day. One in three women experience domestic violence by a significant other and one in four men experience it, as reported by [www.NCTSN.org](http://www.NCTSN.org).

Sadly, the violent acts against men are very under-reported. There is a stigma with men “crying domestic violence.” As if they should be immune to it. Domestic violence does not always take a physical form.

Domestic violence almost always starts with control and isolation. Manipulation is a common element women use against men, men use against women and, both sexes use against children. Domestic or intimate partner abuse is not sex specific nor are the victims and survivors.

There is a Wheel of Power and Control. Originally designed by Domestic Abuse Intervention Project, Duluth MN – this wheel has been updated to include current ways abusers’ control and victimize others.

If an abuser can isolate you, make you feel vulnerable, to blame for events you have no control over, or that you are underserving or unlovable, they ARE abusing you!

It starts so insidiously. Before you know it, you have no contact with anyone but them. Your family is mad because you don’t come around anymore. Friends stop calling or asking you to come over or out with them. Perhaps even your children join in verbal abuse toward you.

These are all RED FLAGS! Note the butterflies in your stomach. The feeling something is “off” or not “right.” Your intuition is telling you this is dangerous. But the abuser has already got you believing there is nothing else for you and nobody cares (gaslighting).

Now, you finally decide to get help or leave. This is the most crucial and dangerous time. Yes, more dangerous than when you are controlled by this mad person. Leaving is always, ALWAYS THE MOST DANGEROUS TIME!!!!

Before you decide to leave. Make a plan. Call the National Hotline! The National Hotline will connect you to the closest help in your community. In Ripley, Decatur, Dearborn, and Jefferson Counties it is Safe Passage. Coincidentally, the number listed for them is the National Hotline phone number previously listed.

Pack a bag, in a paper sack, or plastic bag. Put it someplace the abuser will not look. Have your personal identity information, or at least copies. Your birth certificate, passport, insurance cards, credit cards (if you can) and/or bank cards. Likely you will not have access to a joint bank account. If not, try, to put back a few dollars here or there. But do not “stay until you can leave financially!” That may be too late!

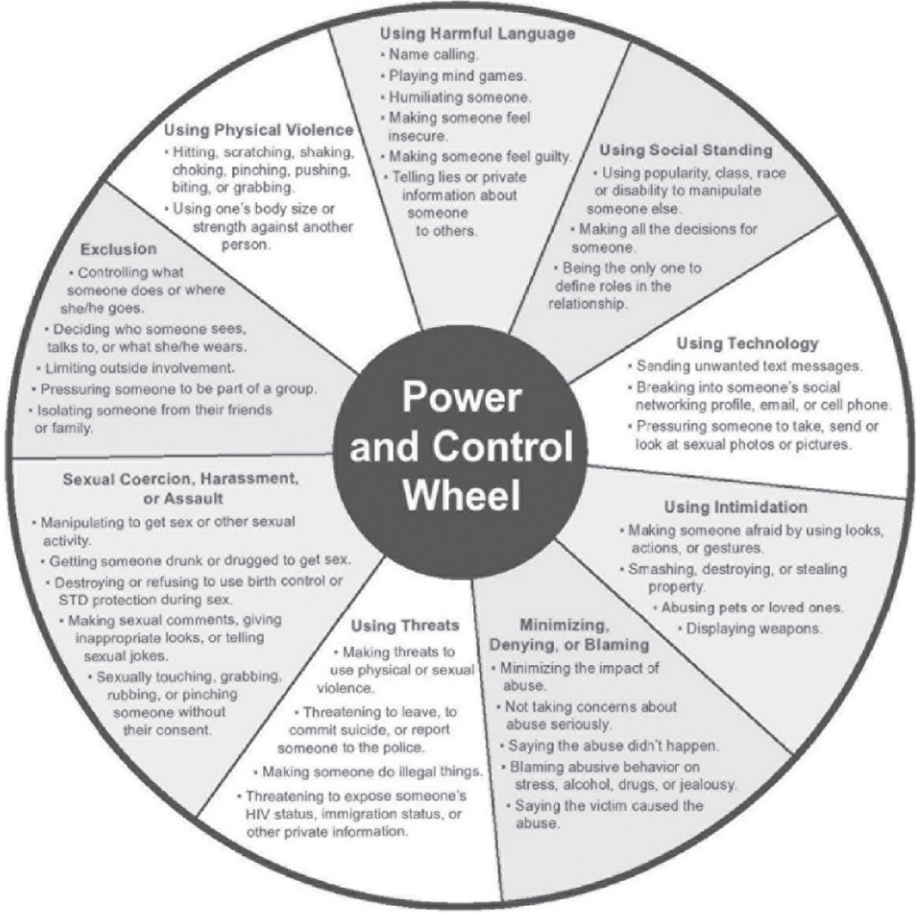
If someone continually texts derogatory messages or degrades you verbally or through others, they are abusing you. Tell someone! Keep telling until someone listens. Victimization happens in a moment. Survivorship is something you must claim and work for yourself!

Once you are gone, stay gone! No matter how tough it is for you, your children or pets. Going back is the second most dangerous time. Now you believe you failed. You did not fail! Perhaps the system failed you.

Many times, the burden of proof lies with the victim! Being a victim is not empowering, you do not feel “believable.” But you are, believed and worth listening to.

The Indiana State Attorney General has an “Address Confidentiality Program.” You will have an ID# and P.O. Box in Indianapolis. All your first-class mail will be directed to the State Attorney General’s Office and sorted to determine if you are getting harassed from the abuser you are escaping.

SURVIVORSHIP.....Con’t to pg. 10





October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

stop the violence

Evening light ceremonies in area focus on voices of survivors

October is Domestic Violence Awareness month, and this year the focus is on highlighting voices of survivors and family members who have gained “Wisdom Within” their past experiences. “We want to give an opportunity for that wisdom to shine a light on raising awareness, seeing the signs, taking action and building resiliency,” said Cari Kettman, Executive Director of Safe Passage. Established 26 years ago, Safe Passage serves six counties: Ripley, Franklin, Ohio, Dearborn, Jefferson and Switzerland Counties. Free support services include shelter, transportation, legal advocacy, emergency hospital response, job and housing assistance, children’s programming, counseling, and life skills.

Locations are being secured in Versailles, Lawrenceburg and Madison for evening “Wisdom Within Light” ceremonies in late October. Check out Safe Passage social media posts for updates on time and location.

“Survivors will share their experience, and the message that everyone deserves to have a healthy, loving and respectful relationship, no matter what. We want to bring to light that there is a place of help, healing and hope for those survivors and their children,” said Kettman. Safe Passage has a 30-bed shelter in Batesville, and satellite offices in Versailles, Madison, Lawrenceburg and Brookville.

On average the local nonprofit serves 1300 survivors and their children a year through the shelter, toll-free helpline and non-residential programming. Last year, 3857 overnight stays at the shelter were provided for these survivors and their children. In addition to direct client support, Safe Passage offers Prevention programming, to stop the violence before it starts. Asset building for 2nd graders and healthy relationship programs are presented to older students throughout schools and youth organizations in the district.

In addition to the Light ceremonies, plans are underway to bring awareness to the issue of domestic and sexual violence during this month. Activities include:

- Signs and banners will be hung in each of our 6 counties in the district.
- Event table at Hispanic Festival at Liberty Park, Batesville.
- Care gift bags distributed throughout district to law enforcement, court, prosecutors and collaborative partners. These care bags include: panel information cards, tear away and fact sheets, appointment cards, and more.
- Oct. 19 is Wear Purple Day to support the survivors of domestic and sexual violence. Please take a photo and post on our social media. <https://www.facebook.com/helphealinghope>
- Safe Passage will participate as a vendor at Trunk or Treat Oct. 21 at RomWeber Marketplace. For more information about domestic or sexual violence go to [www.safepassageinc.org](http://www.safepassageinc.org), call or text 877-733-1990.

“Love shouldn’t hurt”

- Safe Passage Inc.

“I am a Survivor of Domestic Violence”

- Ripley County Resident

Years have passed and still PTSD of my traumas come back to haunt me. If it wasn’t for my family and friends which have stuck with me- I don’t think the paranoia that every man will do the same thing to me- would have gone away. To anyone who has ever been a part of an abusive relationship--I will not tell you that it gets better after they are out of your life -- because I continue to get triggered daily.

My journey through the abuse was hidden from all the ones that cared about me because I was ashamed to come forth and ask for help. I thought because he said the perfect things to reel me back in each time it would stop. But over time it didn’t stop, it became more of a pleasure to him. From yelling over small things, to tracking my phone to know everywhere I went and everything on it and use it as something to hold over me.

I felt isolated, what should have been my safe place was my nightmare. Marks began to be left. Items began to be broke. Excuses to why I wanted to stay home instead of doing things with others became an everyday occurrence.

For anyone involved with a narcissist: having a child with a narcissist does not make them change; but I sure hoped that it would. Even being pregnant never stopped him from hitting me. The front he had only lasted so long ,because the less he could control it the more people saw. Eventually, people reacted and stepped forward to help me.

After finally escaping the situation with the help of others, everyone asked me why I stayed for seven straight years of it. My response to everyone was, after so long I started to believe I deserved it all. Because he had me believing everything I did was wrong. My mind was morphed to not know there were better things for me.

I will also say it is very true that you have to be ready to leave a situation on your own terms. No one else can convince you. With all the sadness, the bright side is that I made it out alive and seven years after leaving I now have my own home, my own car and able to support my 3 babies on my own with no help. I will forever have the scars and traumas that come from being a survivor and a fighter but I have taken back my power for me and for my babies. And with my village I will continue to rise up.

SURVIVORSHIP.....Con’t from pg. 9

There is no time limit for using this. As long as you are identified by the name you are known as while abused, you may use this mail service. There are other survivor tools you will have access to and if a criminal act is committed. The Prosecutor’s Office will make you aware of and assist you with utilizing these services.

Please, tell someone. Tell, and re-tell until someone listens. It should not be up the victim to “make” someone listen, but it often is. Every time someone Survives and tells their personal experiences, more people will know to listen.

Many people stay because they have a beloved pet that will be a casualty if you leave, or children that will suffer if you separate. There are resources to mediate for you and the abuser. Often, safe houses now allow a pet to come with you; children are always allowed/welcome.

DCS is there to help a person to survive abuse. Not just to prosecute you if your children are in an unsafe situation. Do NOT let the abuser control your every thought. It is up to you to survive. Only then can others help you.

Victims are only a victim in the moment of abuse. You can choose to survive from that moment forward. There are services and people who will help you. It is Not easy. This article does not mean to imply it is.

This article is meant to assist you to find your voice. To be your voice, until you find your own. Being abused is, possibly the worst thing that can happen to anybody!

You are a Beautiful Child of Our Creator! You are meant to be happy and fulfilled. Please, let us help you! You are important to your family, your children, and, yes, even to your pets. You are worthy. You are loved. But first you must love yourself enough to reach out to those who love you and do not even know you, yet.

National Hotline: 1 (800) 799-7233. Text “START” to 88788. #Every1KnowsSome1!!!!

If you are in immediate danger, dial 911 and order a pizza. Seriously, they will follow up and you always give your address to a pizza delivery.



A NEW WAY TO CONNECT WITH US!

Introducing Hope Chat

Text "Hopechat" to

1-877-733-1990

Between 9 AM & 9 PM

You are NEVER Alone

Ripley County Sheriff’s Office