

Parents Page

APRIL 2017



WHAT IS HEART OF GRANT COUNTY?

Heart of Grant County is a Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault program. As a private non-profit organization serving all of Grant County, Heart works closely with a network of local supporters to help families break the cycle of violence. Heart delivers a wide range of crisis & educational services to adults, teens, & children.

CONFIDENTIAL AND FREE SERVICES

Heart's services are designed to help survivors of abuse regain control of their lives, start the healing process, develop self-esteem, and break the cycle of violence so that future abuse can be prevented.

SERVICES INCLUDE:

- 24 hour Hotline
- Emergency Transportation
- Self-Help Materials
- Empowerment groups
- Temporary Safe Housing locally & access to a nationwide network of emergency shelters
- Crisis Counseling, and referrals to other services
- Court, Legal, and Medical Advocacy
- Individual Peer Advocacy
- Prevention Presentations and community outreach

WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

Domestic Violence is about power and control. Batterers maintain control over their victims through physical, sexual, emotional and/or economic abuse. Here are some of the forms that domestic violence can take:

- Physical assault
- Sexual assault
- Verbal abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Psychological abuse
- Social control (often isolation)
- Financial control
- Spiritual control
- Stalking and harassment
- Threats and other intimidation

Every 15 seconds in the United States, a woman is battered and approximately 4 are killed per day by their husband, boyfriend or live-in partner. This epidemic of violence can touch any of us.

A SAFETY PLAN IS IMPORTANT

If someone you know plans to leave her home, make sure she has a safety plan before she leaves. If she is unsure about her safety, encourage her to call Heart where she can get help to put together a safety plan. Never encourage her to follow a plan she doesn't consider "safe".

(We refer to a female victim because the overwhelming majority of domestic victims are women. However, these guidelines apply equally)

WHAT IS SEXUAL ASSAULT?

Sexual Assault is an act of violence, not sexual expression. It is any touch or act that is sexual in content or is used for the sexual gratification of the perpetrator by force, threat of force, trickery, coercion, bribery, or between people where an imbalance exists in age, size, power, development or knowledge. Sexual assault includes child sexual abuse, rape, and incest and ritual abuse. Anyone can be a victim of sexual assault – your partner, your grandmother, your neighbor, your brother or your daughter. Sexual assault cuts across lines of race, sex, class, age and background.

- 1 out of 3 females is sexually assaulted at some point in her life.
- Increasing numbers of males are seeking services for sexual victimization.
- 1 out of 7 married women are sexually assaulted.
- 90% of victims know their assailant.

RED FLAGS

- Does your partner try to prevent you from seeing your friends & family?
- Does your partner constantly criticize you & your abilities?
- Does your partner intimidate or threaten you?
- Does your partner hit, punch, slap, or kick you?
- Has your partner ever prevented you from leaving the house, getting a job, or continuing your education?
- Has your partner ever destroyed things that you cared about?
- Has your partner ever threatened you with a weapon?
- Has your partner ever forced you to have sex, or forced you to engage in sexual acts that make you feel uncomfortable?

EFFECTS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON OUR CHILDREN

Studies show that 3-4 million children between the ages of 3-17 are at risk of exposure to domestic violence each year. U.S. government statistics say that 95% of domestic violence cases involve female victims of male partners. The children of these women often witness the violence.

Children exposed to battering become fearful and anxious. They are always on guard, watching and waiting for the next event to occur. Worried for themselves, their mother, and their siblings.

Emotional responses of children who witness domestic violence may include fear, guilt, shame, sleep disturbances, sadness, depression, and anger (at both the abuser for the violence and at the mother for being unable to prevent the violence).

Physical responses may include stomachaches and/or headaches, bedwetting, and loss of ability to concentrate. Some children may also experience physical or sexual abuse or neglect. Others may be injured while trying to intervene on behalf of their mother or sibling.

Behavioral responses may include acting out, withdrawal, or anxiousness to please. They may exhibit signs of anxiety and have a short attention span which may result in poor school performance and attendance. They may experience developmental delays in speech, motor or cognitive skills. They may also use violence to express themselves displaying increased aggression with peers or mother. They can become self-injuring.

Long-term effects on children who witness domestic violence often suffer emotional and psychological trauma from living in homes where their father abuses their mother. Children whose mothers are abused are denied the kind of normal life that fosters healthy development. Children who grow up observing their mother being abused, especially by their father, grow up with a role model of intimate relationships in which one person uses intimidation and violence over the other person to get their way. Seeing their mothers treated with enormous disrespect, teaches children that they can disrespect women the way their fathers do.

Please call for confidential & free services

Phone: 541-575-4335 • Fax: 541-575-4336
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