

Domestic Violence

Myths

- Domestic Violence Is Only Physical
- Alcohol and drugs cause domestic violence
- Domestic violence is an anger management issue
- Victims can just fight back or walk away
- Some women deserve to or need to be abused
- My children aren't aware of the violence in their home so they aren't at risk of being harmed
- Domestic violence only occurs among lower class or minority or rural communities
- Partners need couples counseling

Facts

- Abuse can be verbal, emotional, sexual, and physical and can be directed against a person or their belongings
- Domestic violence is a choice. Some abusers may blame their actions on the use of/the lack of drugs and/or alcohol
- Domestic violence has nothing to do with anger. Anger is a tool abusers use to get what they want
- Family and social pressure, shame, financial barriers, children, and religious beliefs can make it difficult for victims to leave and fighting back may be too dangerous
- No one deserves to be abused. Everyone has the right to live free of violence
- Studies show that most children are aware of the violence directed at their parents and subjecting children to violent actions and hateful words can cause severe psychological trauma
- Domestic violence crosses all race and class lines. Similar rates of abuse are reported in cities, suburbs and rural areas, according to the Bureau of Justice
- It is the abuser alone who needs counseling in order to change; Couples counseling implies that victims are partly responsible for the abuse

Sexual Assault

Myths

- Sexual assault is an act of lust and passion that can't be controlled
- If a victim does not fight back, they must have enjoyed the assault
- A lot of victims lie about being raped or give false reports
- A person cannot sexually assault their partner or spouse
- Rape does not happen that often
- People that have been sexually assaulted will be hysterical and crying
- Wearing revealing clothing, behaving provocatively, or drinking a lot means the victim was "asking for it"
- If a parent teaches a child to stay away from strangers they won't get raped

Facts

- Sexual assault is about power and control and is not motivated by sexual gratification
- Many survivors experience tonic immobility or a "freeze response" during an assault where they physically cannot move or speak
- Only 2-8% of rapes are falsely reported
- Nearly 1 in 10 women have experienced rape by an intimate partner in their lifetime
- There is an average of 293,066 victims ages 12 or older of rape and sexual assault each year in the U.S. This means 1 sexual assault occurs every 107 seconds
- Everyone responds differently to trauma- some may laugh, some may cry, and others will not show any emotions
- The victim's behavior or clothing choices do not mean that they are consenting to sexual activity
- 60% of child sexual abuse cases are perpetrated by someone the child knows outside the family, and 30% are assaulted by family members

Individual/ Couples and Family Counseling for Victims

Support Groups for Adult and Teen Victims

Health and Wellness Information Seminars

School/ Court Advocacy and Support

If you are unsure whether you have experienced **sexual assault** or **domestic violence** please contact us today!

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Life is beautiful!



Life & Wellness Counseling and Consulting, PLLC

Resources for the Lake Norman Area

Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Services and Support



"There are far too many silent sufferers. Not because they don't yearn to reach out, but because they've tried and found no one who cares."

– Richelle E. Goodrich

Sexual Assault, as defined by the *National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC)*, is when an individual is forced or manipulated into unwanted sexual activity without their consent.

Types of Sexual Violence:

- Rape or sexual assault
- Child sexual assault and incest
- Intimate partner sexual assault
- Unwanted sexual contact/touching
- Sexual harassment/ exploitation
- Public exhibitionism/ masturbation
- Watching someone in a private act without their knowledge or permission

Rape on Campus:

- Around 1 in 5 women may experience sexual assault during undergraduate years
- Sexual assault is NOT a “misunderstanding” – if there is not clear consent, it is criminal
- Fewer than 5% of completed and attempted rapes amongst college students are reported to law enforcement
- You can always withdraw consent – you have the right to change your mind
- Fewer than 1/3 of campus sexual assault cases result in expulsion
- When colleges address college sexual assault, it is in addition to – not a replacement for – what police do

Domestic Violence, as defined by the *National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV)*, is the wilful intimidation, physical assault, battery, sexual assault, and/or other abusive behaviour as part of a systematic pattern of power and control perpetrated by one intimate partner against another.

Know the Signs

Characteristics of an Abusive Partner:

- Denies the existence or minimizes the seriousness of the violence
- Objectifies the victim and often sees them as their property
- Externalizes the causes of their behaviour and blames partners or circumstances
- May be pleasant and charming between periods of violence and is often seen as a “nice person” to others outside the relationship

Common Behaviors:

- Extremely possessive/ jealous
- Forced sex or disregard of their partner's unwillingness to have sex
- Blaming the victim for anything bad that happens
- Controls all finances and makes all financial decisions
- Accusations of victim flirting with others or having an affair
- Harassment of the victim at work
- Intimidating behaviour
- Lecturing/ Verbal aggression
- Administering consequences if victim does not meet their needs

Support and Resources

It's your right to live violence-free!

- Create a safety plan for yourself, your children, and your pets – share your plan with family, friends, and neighbors
- Apply for a protective order
- Find time away from your abuser to take steps to regain financial independence
- Keep your important papers and documents safe
- Pack an emergency bag with essential clothes and toiletries
- If your abuser is out of the home, keep your doors and windows locked

Emergency Help Lines:

National Domestic Violence Hotline
1-800-799-HELP (7233)

NC Coalition Against Domestic Violence
1-888-737-2272

During a crisis or emergency, call
911

For therapeutic and supportive services, contact *Life & Wellness Counseling and Consulting*
704-564-0300

*****NEVER make an attempt to leave a relationship if there is a chance that the situation will become violent!***

Support and Resources

We believe you... it wasn't your fault.

- Some days will be more difficult than others
- It is very common to experience, flashbacks, panic attacks, or nightmares following the assault
- You may have difficulty with boundaries, intimacy, or future relationships (too rigid or too liberal)
- Arousal during intercourse is a natural human response – it does not mean that you wanted to be or enjoyed being sexually assaulted
- Reporting an incident of sexual assault is your choice

Emergency Help Lines:

National Sexual Assault Hotline
1-800-656-HOPE (4673)

National Human Trafficking Resource Center
1-888-373-7888

During a crisis or emergency, call
911

For therapeutic and supportive services, contact *Life & Wellness Counseling and Consulting*
704-564-0300

*****NEVER try to fight against an attacker if they are in possession of a weapon!***