

If you think someone you know is being abused, YOU can help

- Listen
- Show support
- NEVER blame the victim
- Tell your friend you are worried for them
- Ask how you can help
- Encourage your friend to seek help
- Avoid confronting the abuser-- it could be dangerous
- Instead of deciding what is best for your friend, help them make their own decisions

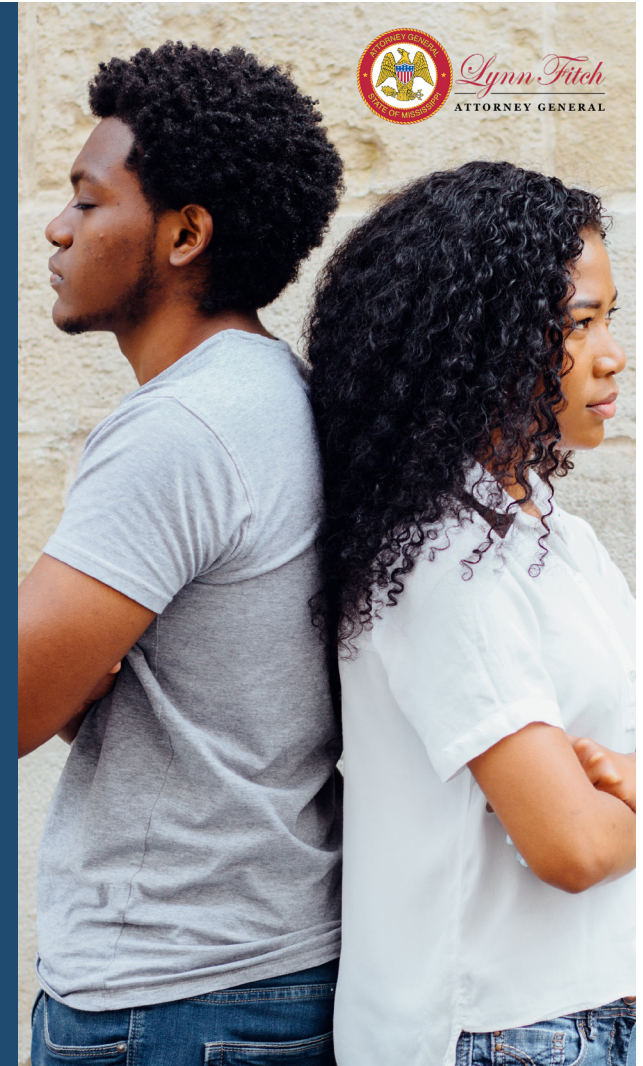


If you think someone you know may be in an abusive relationship, YOU can help

- If you feel safe doing so, ask your friend to clarify their feelings and let them know you are concerned
- Encourage your friend to seek help from a counselor
- Call the Office of the Attorney General for resources in your area.



Office of the Attorney General  
Bureau of Victim Assistance  
P.O. Box 220 Jackson, MS 39205  
601.359.6766 | 800.829.6766  
[attorneygenerallynnfitch.com](http://attorneygenerallynnfitch.com)



# DATING VIOLENCE

## Expect Respect

# Dating Violence

Dating violence occurs when one person in a relationship, in an attempt to control the other person, uses abusive acts to make that person do what they want. This may involve physical violence, but relationships can be abusive even if physical violence doesn't occur. The abuse can be verbal, emotional, sexual or a combination of these. If the person you are involved with acts controlling, aggressive, coercive or violent, you may be in an abusive relationship.



Controlling behavior may include:

- Not letting you hang out with your friends
- Calling or texting you frequently to find out where you are, who you are with and what you are doing
- Telling you what to wear
- Having to be with you all the time

Verbal or emotional abuse may include:

- Calling you names
- Extreme jealousy
- Belittling you
- Threatening to hurt you, someone in your family or themselves, if you do not do what they want



Physical abuse may include:

- Shoving
- Punching
- Slapping
- Pinching
- Hitting
- Kicking
- Hair pulling
- Strangling

Sexual abuse may include:

- Unwanted touching and kissing
- Forcing you to have sex
- Forcing you to do other sexual things

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Anyone can be a victim of dating violence, and anyone can commit dating violence. Nothing you say, wear, or do gives someone the right to hurt you physically or emotionally.

If you are being abused, you may...

- Believe it's your own fault
- Feel angry, sad, depressed or confused
- Feel helpless to stop the abuse
- Feel threatened, humiliated or ashamed
- Feel anxious, trapped or lonely
- Worry about what might happen next
- Feel like you can't talk to family or friends
- Be afraid of getting hurt
- Feel protective of your significant other
- Feel bad for yourself

These are normal reactions.  
**YOU ARE NOT ALONE.**

If you think you may be in an abusive relationship, here are some safety tips:

- Let friends, family or a trusted adult know that you are afraid or need help.
- Trust your instincts. Don't downplay the danger. If you feel unsafe, you probably are.
- Take threats seriously. Danger is often highest when the abuser talks about suicide or murder or when the victim tries to break off the relationship.
- When you go out, tell someone where you are going and when you will be back.
- Memorize emergency contact information.
- Have money available for transportation needed to escape.