



# Common Myths of Domestic Violence



# Common Myths

**MYTH:** Domestic violence is a loss of control.

**FACT:** Domestic violence is a choice. Perpetrators use it to control their victims.


**MYTH:** Middle and upper class women do not get battered.

**FACT:** Domestic violence occurs in all socio-economic levels. Because a woman with money usually has access to more resources, they are therefore less visible.




# Common Myths

**MYTH:** Family violence is rare.



**FACT:** The statistics on family violence are not precise, although it's clear that millions of children, women and even men have been abused physically, emotionally, and sexually by family members and other intimates.

**MYTH:** Alcohol/drugs cause battering behavior.



**FACT:** Although many abusive partners also abuse alcohol/drugs, this is not the underlying cause of the battering. Many batterers use this as an excuse.

# Common Myths

**MYTH:** If the victim didn't like it she would leave.

**FACT:** Victims do not like the abuse. They stay in the relationship for many reasons, including fear. Most do eventually leave.

**MYTH:** Victims of domestic violence have psychological disorders.

**FACT:** This characterization of battered women as mentally ill stems from the assumption that victims of domestic violence must be sick or they would not "take" the abuse. More recent theories demonstrate that battered women resist abuse in a variety of ways.

# Common Myths

**MYTH:** Abusers have low self esteem.

**FACT:** Abusers do not have low self esteem. They believe they are entitled to have power and control over their partner.


**MYTH:** Once a battered woman, always a battered woman.

**FACT:** While some battered women have been in more than one abusive relationship, women who receive domestic violence services are the least likely to enter into another abusive relationship.



# Common Myths

**MYTH:** The victim is responsible for the violence because she provokes it.



**FACT:** No one asks to be abused and no one deserves to be abused regardless of what they say or do.

**MYTH:** Batterers abuse their partners or spouses because they are under a lot of stress or unemployed.



**FACT:** Stress or unemployment does not cause batterers to abuse their partners.



# Common Myths

**MYTH:** Children are not affected when one parent abuses the other.

**FACT:** Children are traumatized when they witness domestic violence.

**MYTH:** Domestic violence is irrelevant to parental fitness.

**FACT:** Because children often suffer physical and emotional harm from living in violent homes, domestic violence is extremely relevant to parental fitness.



# Common Myths

**MYTH:** Batterers are violent in all their relationships.

**FACT:** Batterers choose to be violent toward their partners in ways they would never consider treating other people.

**MYTH:** Violent men come from violent homes.

**FACT:** Not all abusers come from violent homes.