

MIYKIWAN TOOLKIT  
FACT SHEET

# DATING VIOLENCE

## WHAT IS ....

Dating violence is an act of violence, whether it be physical, sexual or emotional, committed by one partner in a dating relationship. The abuser tries to take control over the other person and destroy their well-being and self-worth in order to gain power.

Victims of dating violence may only experience one incident or be subjected to an ongoing pattern of incidents. Many dating violence victims have been subjected to a combination of physical, sexual and emotional abuse.



*“When I arrived at the location of the bar he was nowhere to be found so I figured he must have gotten a ride from someone else.*

*When I arrived home he called again and he was very upset that I didn't come to get him. I headed back...with the biggest knot in my stomach because I knew what was going to happen.”*

## KEY THINGS TO KNOW

- Dating violence can occur in any type of relationship, regardless of a person's sexual orientation, age or gender; both males and females experience dating violence
- 53% of police-reported incidents of intimate partner violence were due to dating violence (2013)
- More than 80% of victims of intimate partner violence between the ages of 15 to 19 were abused by a dating partner (2013)
- The majority of reported intimate partner violence among those under the age of 25 happened between dating partners (2013)
- 33% of victims of intimate partner violence were abused by a former spouse or dating partner (2013)
- For both men and women, violence after the break-up of a relationship was more common among ex-dating partners (20%) than among ex-spouses (13%)
- The use of technology in dating violence is quite common; this can include excessive texting, unwanted posts on social networking websites, demands for password access, etc.

## FORMS OF DATING VIOLENCE

There are many forms of dating violence; these are the most common:

- **Physical & Sexual Abuse:** hitting, shoving pushing or any other physical act forced upon a person in a relationship; forcing another to engage in a sexual activity or touching
- **Emotional Abuse:** when a partner uses words or actions to psychologically manipulate, control, frighten or isolate someone or destroy their self-respect or self-esteem
- **Neglect:** when a person is not given the basic love, care and attention that a healthy relationship needs
- **Harassment:** when a partner repeatedly causes the victim to fear

## WARNING SIGNS

There are certain signs that can make you aware of someone who is being abused in a dating relationship. These include:

- Person is always being manipulated by their partner
- Unexplained bruises, marks or questionable explanations for injuries
- Being insulted, humiliated or criticized in front of other people
- Gradually separated from their family members and friends
- Acts very differently when their partner is around such as not speaking up, lowering their voice, staring downwards and away from people

## STRATEGIES AND NEXT STEPS

Being the victim of dating violence brings with it many painful experiences such as hurt, fear, confusion and depression. Please remember:

- Do not be afraid to reach out to people in your community such as your elders, Aboriginal & shelter groups and school counsellors
- Remember that the problems and the hurt you are experiencing in your relationship are not your fault; you do not deserve to go through something like this

## WHY DO SOME PEOPLE STAY?

- Victim feels a sense of belonging
- It may be their first romantic relationship and they hope to make it last as long as they can
- Victim may not want to give up financial benefits offered by abuser (car, money, clothes, etc.)
- Victim blames themselves for problems in the relationship and feels that they are responsible for fixing everything
- Victim thinks that jealousy and possessiveness are signs that their partner loves them
- Abusive partner always apologizes for their behaviour leading the victim to hope that the relationship will work out

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If you need help or someone to talk to please contact the National Office for Victims Services Center, toll free at: **1-866-525-0554** or Kids Help Phone, toll free at: 1-800-668-6868, [www.kidshelpphone.ca](http://www.kidshelpphone.ca)

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To obtain more information regarding the CAP Family Violence Prevention Awareness Toolkit, please contact the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples at [www.abo-peoples.org](http://www.abo-peoples.org) or call 1-613-747-6022.

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