

## Men are Victims of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) Too

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) does not discriminate between men and women. Every year in the U.S. and Canada, about 3.2 million men are the victims of an assault by an intimate partner. Research found that 22 percent of men experienced physical, sexual, or psychological IPV during their lifetime. Men of different ethnicity than their partners are at greater risk being a victim of IPV.

### Why Men Do Not Report IPV Abuse

One reason men do not report abuse is that they feel people will not believe them. Arguably, IPV towards women had been ignored for so long, society now finds the concept of violence towards men difficult to grasp and consequently has been slow to address it as a serious issue.

Men, even if they are hit by a woman partner in front of others, can often hide their abuse by saying they would never retaliate or hit a woman. Their 'abuse' can even be interpreted as a strength or masculine characteristic.

Humiliation as abuse is more difficult to rationalize. Belittling, humiliating IPV can have a devastating effect and allows power to rest unfairly with the abuser. Regular, repeated psychological and emotional abuse undermines confidence. Men begin to believe that they deserve the abuse, that they are worthless human beings nobody else would want. It is a difficult belief to think otherwise if it has gone on for a long time, and it is one

of the major reasons why people remain in abusive relationships.



The level of violence inflicted on men by women is generally less serious than that inflicted on women, but IPV abuse is still a significant men's health problem. Most assaults include

kicking, biting or punching their partner, threatening to hit or throw something at their partner, and pushing, grabbing or shoving. Some are more serious - and some end in homicide.

What will hurt a man mentally and emotionally can in some cases be very different from what hurts a woman. For some men being called a coward, impotent or a failure can have a very different psychological impact than it would on a woman. Unkind and cruel words hurt, but they can hurt in different ways and linger in different ways. In most cases, men are more deeply affected by emotional abuse than physical abuse. In some cases, humiliating a man emotionally in front of other men can be more devastating than physical abuse. Some professionals have observed that mental and emotional abuse can be an area where women are often more "brutal" than men.



## Motives

Some scholars suggest that the motives for intimate partner abuse against men by women may differ from those for abuse against women by men.

In a recent survey of female college students 30% admitted they assaulted a male partner. Their most common reasons: (1) my partner wasn't listening to me; (2) my partner wasn't being sensitive to my needs; and (3) I wished to gain my partner's attention.

## Violence in Gay Male Relationships

Gay men are just as susceptible to domestic violence as any other member of society. There are some differences though. Gay men may be more reluctant to expose their sexuality to health care professionals. Healthcare workers are not immune to prejudice and may be intolerant of gay relationships. The victim may have the same friends as the abuser, and can be worried about losing the support from his partner and mutual friends.

## Children and abuse

Domestic violence affects children, even if they're just witnesses. If you have children, remember that exposure to domestic violence puts them at risk of developmental problems, psychiatric disorders, problems at school, aggressive behavior and low self-esteem. You might worry that seeking help could further endanger you and your children, or that it might break up your family. Fathers might fear that abusive partners will try to take their children away from them. However, getting help is the best way to protect your children — and yourself.

Do not ignore or put up with domestic violence. If you or someone you know is the victim/survivor of IPV and needs help please take action to increase your safety and the safety of your children. Consider:

- If you or your children are in immediate danger or need urgent medical attention, **contact the police or ambulance services by calling 911** or the emergency number for your community.
- If you want to contact the police but the situation is not urgent, call the non-emergency number for police in your community.
- If you're not sure about reporting to the police, please contact VictimLink BC at 1-800-563-0808 to discuss your options.
- If you or your children are not in a safe place, go to one.
- Tell someone you trust what happened. Allow a friend or family member to provide emotional support or practical help to you.
- Contact a victim service worker in your community by calling VictimLink BC at 1-800-563-0808. A victim service worker can help you directly and can also refer you to counselling and other services.
- Get help from a victim service worker to **develop a safety plan** to reduce the risks that you and your children face because of a violent situation.

**Remember...  
If you are in an  
abusive  
relationship  
It's not your fault!**



## **MALE VICTIMS OF INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE**

D.O.V.E.  
Coordinating Committee:  
Working Together  
To End  
Relationship Violence

<http://deltapolice.ca/victimservices/dove.php>

<http://www.deltassist.com/dove.html>



**D. O. V. E.  
(Delta Opposes Violence  
Everywhere)  
Coordinating Committee**



***The Delta Opposes Violence  
Everywhere Coordinating Committee is  
committed to ending violence in  
human relationships, and its impact on  
everyone.***

***The committee is working towards  
improving a coordinated response to  
incidents of violence in relationships  
by identifying, and addressing gaps or  
barriers in service delivery and  
promoting respectful relationships.***