



Red Flags

Although no one can fully predict whether a relationship will turn out to be abusive, some warning signs do exist. If your partner displays any of the following characteristics, you need to be cautious.

- **Prior violent or abusive behavior:**

Probably the most important risk factor to battering is past abusive behavior. Without some form of intervention, the abuser is likely to continue.

- **Violent abuse by his/her parents:**

Studies show that abusers were more likely to have been abused as children. Abusers who witnessed abuse between their parents were more likely to batter as adults.

- **Alcohol and Drug abuse:**

About 80% of domestic abuse involves alcohol and/or drug abuse.

- **Cruelty to Animals:**

Any person who beats animals ought to be considered a potential domestic abuser.

- **Wanting control over Financial Matters:**

If he/she insists that the rent, car, bank accounts, etc. be kept in his/her name, their partner will be less likely to be able to leave and is therefore subject to his/her control.

- **Holding rigid, traditional views of sex roles and parenting, or negative attitudes toward their partner in general**

- **Showing extreme jealousy and possessiveness, which often leads to isolation of the victim from other family and friends.**

- **Physical abuse during courtship**

- Denying the abuse, minimizing the seriousness of the abuse, or refusing to take responsibility for the abusive behavior.