



## What Can I Do?

- Ask direct questions, gently. Give the victim time to talk. Do not rush into giving solutions.
- **Listen**- without judging. Victims often believe their abuser's negative messages. They feel responsible, ashamed, inadequate, and are afraid they will be judged.
- **Explain**- Physical Violence in a relationship is never acceptable, at any time. There is no excuse for it- not alcohol, drugs, financial pressures, depression, or jealousy.
- **Explain**- domestic violence is a crime- as much of a crime as robbery or rape- and that they can seek protection in the criminal justice system.
- You might want to reach out and support any children of the victim and let them know you are there for them, too.
- Give the victim information about legal resources: the phone number of the local domestic violence hotline, support groups, counseling, shelter programs, and legal advocacy services. If they are over 60, give them information on elder abuse services.

## Let them know....

- You support and care about them.
- They are not responsible for the violence.
- Only the abuser can stop the violence
- They are not alone. Millions of individuals from every ethnic, racial, socio-economic, and age group suffer from abuse and find it difficult to leave.
- Despite the abuser's promises, the violence will continue and probably escalate.
- Domestic violence is damaging the children.
- When they are ready, they can make a choice to leave the relationship and that there is help available.
- The victim might need:
  - Financial Assistance
  - Help finding a place to live or store their belongings
  - Assistance to escape
- Decide if you feel comfortable helping in these ways.
- Contact Golden House for advice and guidance. You may need support yourself.
- You can request that your identity remain anonymous. Although these assaults are often dangerous, do not physically intervene.
- **If the victim is planning to leave,** remind them to take important papers with them such as birth certificates, passports, bank account numbers, etc.
- **If the victim remains in the relationship,** continue to be their friend while firmly communicating that their children and themselves do not deserve to be in this violent situation.

You may have a friend, relative, or neighbor who is being abused. You may have witnessed the violence, heard it, seen physical signs of it, or merely suspected it for various reasons.

### **What should you do?**