

# **NJ Resource Guide for Women**

## **Section VII:**

### **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

**NJ Department of Community Affairs  
Division on Women  
Spring 2009**

## **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

### **Domestic Violence:**

- ◆ Domestic violence is the occurrence of one or more of the following criminal acts committed against a victim, who is 18 years of age or older or an emancipated minor\*, by an adult:
  - Assault
  - Burglary
  - Criminal Mischief
  - Criminal Restraint
  - Terrorist Threats
  - Criminal Sexual Contact
  - Criminal Trespass
  - False Imprisonment
  - Harassment
  - Homicide
  - Kidnapping
  - Lewdness
  - Sexual Assault
  - Stalking

\*Emancipated minor means a person who is under 18 years of age but who has been married, has entered military service, has a child or is pregnant, or has been declared by a court or administrative agency to be emancipated.

### **Identifying An Abusive Relationship:**

- ◆ Domestic violence is a pattern of abusive behaviors that some individuals use to control their intimate partners. Domestic violence can include physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and other controlling behaviors.

### **Does Your Partner Ever:**

- Hit, kick, shove or injure you?
- Use weapons/objects against you or threaten to use them?
- Force or coerce you to engage in unwanted sexual acts?
- Threaten to kill you, himself/herself, children, pets, or others?
- Control what you do and who you see in a way that interferes with your work, education or other personal activities?
- Steal or destroy your belongings?
- Constantly criticize you, call you names or put you down? Make you feel afraid?
- Deny your basic needs such as money, food, housing, clothing, or medical and physical assistance?
- Act like the abuse is no big deal, it's your fault, or even deny doing it?
- Threaten to hurt you or others, have you deported, disclose your sexual orientation or other personal information?

**If you answered "YES" to any of the above questions, it may be time to think about your safety. Call 1 (800) 572-SAFE (7233) for a referral to a local support program in your area.**

## **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

### **Know You Are Not Alone:**

- ◆ Abusers often isolate victims and threaten harm if anyone else discovers the abuse. As a result, victims think they are the only ones involved in this type of relationship. Domestic violence happens more than you think, and people are prepared to help.

### **Domestic Violence Can Happen to Anyone:**

- ◆ Domestic violence is a crime. Nearly one-third of American women (31 percent) report being physically or sexually abused by a husband or boyfriend at some point in their lives. More than one million people report a violent assault by an intimate partner every year in the United States. Domestic violence can happen to anyone regardless of employment or educational level, race or ethnic background, religion, marital status, physical ability, age, or sexual orientation.

### **Domestic Violence Is NOT Your Fault:**

- ◆ If you are being abused by your partner, you may feel confused, afraid, angry and/or trapped. All of these emotions are normal responses to abuse. You may also blame yourself for what is happening, but no matter what others might say, you are never responsible for your partner's abusive actions. Batterers choose to be abusive. Abusers blame their victims as though they deserved to be abused. The perpetrator is always responsible for his/her actions. Abusers are completely responsible for their behavior, regardless of their habits or weaknesses.

### **Identifying Support:**

- ◆ Developing a support network can be very helpful to you as you plan for your safety. There are many places to turn for resources, support and assistance. Part of an abuser's power comes from secrecy of the abuse. Let people know what is happening so they can look out for your well-being. Any pattern of abuse is a sign of an unhealthy relationship.

### **Domestic Violence Programs:**

- ◆ Each county in New Jersey offers programs that offer a variety of free and confidential services for victims of domestic violence.

### **NJ Domestic Violence Hotline**

**Toll Free: 1 (800) 572-SAFE (7233)**

**Web:** <http://www.nj.gov/dca/dow/countyresourcesdv.shtml>

- ◆ Provides a statewide 24-hour, seven day a week domestic violence hotline to serve domestic violence victims and others seeking information about domestic violence. The Hotline provides bilingual service and is accessible to the hearing impaired. To find domestic violence services in your area, visit the Division On Women's website noted above.

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### Community Support

- Family
- Friends
- Co-workers
- Neighbors
- Churches
- Service Providers (legal, health, counseling centers)
- Women's & Community Groups

### **Planning for Your Safety:**

- ◆ If you are currently in an abusive relationship, it is important for you to take precautions to ensure your safety. Without help, domestic violence often continues to get more severe over time. It sometimes can become deadly.
  
- ◆ **Create a Safety Plan** in the event that you are abused again:
  - **Tell others you trust**, such as friends, family, neighbors, and co-workers, what is happening and talk about ways they might be able to help.
  - **Memorize emergency numbers for local police (such as 911)**, support persons and crisis hotlines.
  - **Identify escape routes and places to go** if you need to flee from an unsafe situation quickly.
  - **Talk with your children** about what they should do if a violent incident occurs or if they are afraid.
  - **Put together an emergency bag** with money/checkbook, extra car keys, medicine, and important papers such as birth certificates, social security cards, immigration documents, and medical cards. Keep it somewhere safe and accessible, such as with a trusted friend and/or a bank safety deposit bank.
  - **Trust your instincts**—if you think you are in immediate danger, you probably are. Get to a safe place as soon as you can.
  - **Seek medical attention** if you are hurt. Hospitals and satellite emergency departments are required to provide care and information to sexual assault victims about emergency contraception and the contraceptives upon request.
  - **Keep a written record** of the abuse.
  - **Know your legal rights**, there are laws in place to help and protect you.

### **NJ Domestic Violence Hotline**

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- ◆ Provides a statewide 24-hour, seven day a week domestic violence hotline to serve domestic violence victims and others seeking information about domestic violence. The Hotline provides bilingual service and is accessible to the hearing impaired.

### **NJ Coalition for Battered Women**

**Phone: (609) 584-8107**

**Web: <http://www.njcbw.org/>**

- ◆ This is a private, non-profit coalition of domestic violence county programs that provide services for battered women in New Jersey.

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### **Programs That Provide Business Attire For Victims of Domestic Violence:**

- ◆ Your local domestic violence program may be able to provide victims of domestic violence business attire on a case-by-case basis.
- ◆ For a listing of local domestic violence programs, visit the NJ Division on Women's website at <http://www.nj.gov/dca/dow/countyresourcesdv.shtml> or contact the **Domestic Violence Hotline** at **1-800-572-7233 [SAFE]**.

### **Storage Facilities For Women Who Have To Go Into Domestic Violence Shelters:**

- ◆ Your local domestic violence program may be able to assist victims of domestic violence in locating temporary storage facilities on a case-by-case basis.
- ◆ For a listing of local domestic violence programs, visit the NJ Division on Women's website at <http://www.nj.gov/dca/dow/countyresourcesdv.shtml> or contact the **Domestic Violence Hotline** at **1-800-572-7233 [SAFE]**.

### **How Domestic Violence Affects Pets:**

- ◆ 88% of pets in abusive household are abused or killed (A Safe Place).
- ◆ 20-25% of battered women delay seeking safety for themselves and their children because they fear for the lives of the pets left behind (The Animal Companion).

#### **Ways Domestic Violence Victims Can Protect Their Pets**

- Develop an emergency plan for sheltering the pets, themselves, and their children.
- Establish ownership of the pets (obtain an animal license, proof of vaccinations or veterinary receipts all in the victim's name to help prove they own the pets).
- Prepare the pets for departure (collect vaccination and medical records, collar and Identification, medications, bowls, bedding, etc.).
- Ask for assistance from law enforcement or animal care and control officers to reclaim the pets if left behind.

### **Help Is Available:**

#### **New Jersey County Domestic Violence Programs**

- ◆ Each county in New Jersey offers programs that offer a variety of services for victims of domestic violence.
- ◆ Your local domestic violence program may be able to assist victims of domestic violence locate temporary shelter for their animal companions on a case-by-case basis.
- ◆ For a listing of local domestic violence programs, visit the NJ Division on Women's website at <http://www.nj.gov/dca/dow/countyresourcesdv.shtml> or contact the **Domestic Violence Hotline** at **1-800-572-7233 [SAFE]**.

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### **SASHA—Safe and Sound Housing for Animals Mount Pleasant Animal Shelter**

194 Route 10 West

East Hanover, NJ 07936–2701

**Phone: (973) 386-0068 or (973) 386-0590**

**Fax: (973) 386-0773**

**Web:** <http://www.njshelter.org/>

**E-mail:** [robin@njshelter.org](mailto:robin@njshelter.org)

**Contact: Robin Buchanan, Shelter Director**

- Mt. Pleasant Animal Shelter is a limited admission facility founded in 1972, welcoming orphaned cats and dogs as room permits. Quality veterinary care, microchipping, pediatric spay/neuter and kennel enrichment are provided for every animal in our care, and animals are never euthanized for lack of space.
- Helps women and their animal companions in Morris County.

### **The Tender Loving Critter Care**

**St. Hubert's**

575 Woodland Avenue

Madison, NJ 07940–0159

**Phone: (973) 377-5609 or (973) 377-7094**

**Fax: (973) 377-5012**

**Web:** <http://www.sthuberts.org/>

**E-mail:** [info@sthuberts.org](mailto:info@sthuberts.org)

**Contact: Carolyn Currey, Director**

- St Hubert's is a non-profit animal welfare organization dedicated to alleviating the suffering and neglect of companion animals, and providing services that support the human-animal bond.
- Their shelters provide safe refuge and compassionate care for thousands of lost, abandoned, abused and unwanted dogs and cats every year.
- Helps women and their animal companions in northern and central New Jersey.

### **The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS)**

**Toll Free: 1 (888) 213-0956**

**Web:** <http://www.hsus.org/>

- The HSUS offers a free brochure, "*Protecting Your Pet From Domestic Violence*," for battered women. To receive this brochure, call the above toll-free number.
- To view a state-by-state directory of safe haven programs, visit the above website.

### **Dating Violence—For Teens & Young Adults In Controlling or Violent Relationships:**

- ◆ Being a teen or young adult in a dating relationship does not mean that you have to deal with physical, emotional, verbal or sexual abuse. Although you may want to be committed and supportive of your partner, there is no excuse for this type of behavior.

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### Myths About Dating Relationships:

- “A guy needs to be in control of the relationship.”
- “A girl is to blame when a guy hits her.”
- “It is understandable to hit her—maybe next time she will learn not to make me angry.”
- “I love him. I am the only one who can help him.”
- “Some girls ask for it—that is why they stay.”
- “I should not have nagged him. It was my fault he got angry.”
- “When a guy gets angry, he cannot help it. He is uncontrollable.”
- “I was drunk. I did not know what I was doing.”
- “She hit me first and I hit her back. Everybody does it sometimes.”
- “If she really loved him, she could make him change.”
- “If I could figure out what sets him off and not do it, maybe he could stop.”

**All of the above statements are excuses—there is NO EXCUSE for any kind of violence in a dating relationship.**

### Are You In An Abusive Dating Relationship?

- Are you frightened by your partner's temper?
- Are you afraid to disagree with your partner?
- Are you constantly apologizing for your partner's behavior, especially when he or she has treated *you* badly?
- Do you have to justify every place you go, everything you do, or every person you see just to avoid your partner's anger?
- Does your partner constantly put you down and then tell you that he or she loves you?
- Have you ever been hit, kicked, shoved or had things thrown at you?
- Do you not see family or friends or do things just because of your partner's jealousy?
- Have you been forced into having sex when you did not want to?
- Are you afraid to break up because your partner has threatened to hurt you or himself/herself?

**If you answered "YES" to any of the above questions, it may be time to think about your safety. Call 1 (800) 572-SAFE (7233) for a referral to a local support program in your area.**

### Your Rights in a Dating Relationship:

- Express your opinions and have them be respected
- Have your needs be as important as your partner's needs
- Grow as an individual in your own way
- Change your mind
- Fall out of love and break up with someone and not be threatened
- Have a relationship free from physical, sexual, or emotional abuse
- Not take responsibility for your partner's behavior
- Grow as an individual in my own way and not be criticized for it
- Have friends of your own
- Be respected, loved and live a peaceful life
- Say “no”

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### If You Are In An Abusive Dating Relationship, You Can:

- End the relationship and choose not to see your partner
- Get help from someone you trust, preferably an adult, and/or your school counseling center
- Call **1 (800) 572-SAFE (7233)** for a referral to a local support program in your area

### Help Is Available:

#### NJ Domestic Violence Hotline

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- ◆ Provides a statewide 24-hour, seven day a week domestic violence hotline to serve domestic violence victims and others seeking information about domestic violence. The Hotline provides bilingual service and is accessible to the hearing impaired.

#### NJ Coalition for Battered Women

**Phone: (609) 584-8107**

**Web: <http://www.njcbw.org/>**

- ◆ This is a private, non-profit coalition of domestic violence county programs that provide services for battered women in New Jersey.

#### New Jersey Coalition Against Sexual Assault (NJCASA)

**Hotline: 1 (800) 601-7200**

**Phone: (609) 631-4450**

**Web: <http://www.njcasa.org/>**

- ◆ NJCASA is the collective voice for victims of sexual violence, their loved ones and rape crisis centers across NJ. Its member centers represent each of NJ's 21 counties.

#### NJ Domestic Violence Services

**Phone: (609) 292-8840**

**Web: <http://www.nj.gov/dca/dow/countyresourcesdv.shtml>**

- ◆ To find domestic violence services in your area, contact the Division On Women at the above phone number or visit the website.

#### State Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy

**Phone: (609) 896-8855**

**Web: <http://www.njvw.org/index.html>**

**E-mail: [victimassistance@dcj.lps.state.nj.us](mailto:victimassistance@dcj.lps.state.nj.us)**

- ◆ As a crime victim or a witness of a crime, you have certain rights in the criminal justice system. There are many services available to you so that your participation in the criminal justice system will be less stressful and more informed. This is accomplished through the State and County Offices of Victim-Witness Advocacy. In each of the 21 county prosecutors' offices there is a County Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy.

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### The Shelter Housing Exit Program (SHE)

Phone: (609) 633-9183

Web: <http://www.state.nj.us/dca/divisions/dhcr/offices/she.html>

- ◆ Provides housing assistance to victims of domestic violence with children, who are receiving shelter or transitional housing services from domestic violence programs across the state. Security deposits and up to two months rent are available to help victims of domestic violence leave shelters. The program also provides long-term assistance, in the form of security deposits and up to six months of housing assistance payments, to help those families who need assistance into the future. Referrals for the SHE program must come through the victim's local domestic violence shelter. Each county of New Jersey offers programs that have a variety of services for victims of domestic violence.

### State of New Jersey Address Confidentiality Program Act

Toll Free: 1 (877) 218-9133

- ◆ The New Jersey Address Confidentiality Program (ACP) provides assistance to individuals who, as a result of domestic violence, have relocated for their safety. The Address Confidentiality Program provides eligible victims of domestic violence with a substitute mailing address, which has no connection to their actual location. This substitute mailing address may be used when creating new records and/or updating records with state or local government agencies.
- ◆ The ACP will forward program participant's first class mail **FREE OF CHARGE**. The use of a substitute address will limit access to information about the location of individuals participating in the program.

### Unemployment Insurance (UI) Program

Phone: 201-601-4100; Union City (for Northern New Jersey)

732-761-2020; Freehold (for Central New Jersey)

856-507-2340; Cumberland (for Southern New Jersey)

- ◆ Individuals who are unemployed due to circumstances resulting from domestic violence may be eligible for unemployment insurance benefits. A claim for unemployment insurance benefits can be filed by calling one of the three Remote Call Centers: Union City 201-601-4100 (for Northern New Jersey), Freehold 732-761-2020 (for Central New Jersey) or Cumberland 856-507-2340 (for Southern New Jersey).

### Regaining One's Self-Esteem (R.O.S.E.) Fund

Phone: (617) 482 5400

Web: <http://www.rosefund.org>

- ◆ The R.O.S.E. (Regaining One's Self-Esteem) Fund is a national non-profit organization committed to ending violence against women and their children by assisting women survivors of violence to regain their self-esteem. By helping women to achieve a positive self-esteem. The R.O.S.E. Fund hopes to empower individual women victims to achieve self-sufficiency, rebuild their lives, and ultimately help end violence within society.

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### Legal Options:

#### **Criminal Charges**

- ◆ If you or other loved ones have been physically injured, threatened, raped, harassed or stalked, you can report these crimes to the police. Criminal charges may lead to the abuser being arrested and possibly imprisoned.

#### **Restraining/Protective Orders**

- ◆ Even if you choose not to press criminal charges, you can file for a civil court order that directs your partner to stay away from you. In many states, restraining/protective orders also can prohibit the abuser from having contact with you at work, home or anywhere you specify, evict your partner from your home and grant you child custody and the abuser may be ordered to pay child support. Under the law, the judge has the authority to honor your requests by ordering any judgment against the abuser that will aid in your protection.

#### **State Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy**

**Phone: (609) 896-8855**

**Web:** <http://www.njvw.org/index.html>

**E-mail:** [victimassistance@dcj.lps.state.nj.us](mailto:victimassistance@dcj.lps.state.nj.us)

- ◆ As a crime victim or a witness of a crime, you have certain rights in the criminal justice system. There are many services available to you so that your participation in the criminal justice system will be less stressful and more informed. Basically, this is accomplished through the State and County Offices of Victim-Witness Advocacy. In each of the 21 county prosecutors' offices there is a County Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy.

#### **Legal Services of NJ**

P.O. Box 1357

Edison, NJ 08818

**Toll Free: 1 (888) LSNJ-LAW (576-5529)**

**Web:** <http://www.lsnj.org/>

- ◆ This is a private, non-profit organization that provides legal assistance to low-income people in civil matters. For more information about this organization, please visit their website or call them directly on their toll free hotline.

#### **Domestic Violence Representation Project (DVRP)**

- ◆ The DVRP was established in 1996 to provide legal assistance to low-income domestic violence victims and support for pro bono attorneys willing to represent victims of domestic violence. The project offers legal advice and representation to eligible victims of domestic violence at Final Restraining Order hearings as well as in divorce, custody, child support and visitation cases. Please call LSNJ's main number, **(732) 572-9100** or **1 (888) 576-5529**.

#### **Immigration Representation Project (IRP)**

- ◆ Created in 1998, the IRP works to address the needs of low-income immigrants in New Jersey for legal representation in a variety of immigration-related matters, and to provide support for attorneys willing to provide pro bono representation to this population.

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The Immigration Representation Project will provide direct representation to low-income immigrants, focusing primarily on the following types of cases:

- Naturalization cases involving complex issues;
- Self-petitioning to secure lawful permanent residence for women who are victims of domestic violence;
- Asylum cases for detained and non-detained clients;
- Representation in other immigration matters where the client faces the potential loss of public benefits due to their immigration status or where there are other exigent circumstances.

**Clients can access the project by calling the toll-free number, 1-800-LSNJ-LAW (1-800-576-5529).**

### Women's Law Project (NJ)

**Phone: (609) 394-1506**

- ◆ Attorneys trained in domestic violence serving Burlington, Mercer and Ocean Counties.

### New Jersey County Domestic Violence Programs:

- ◆ Each county in New Jersey offers programs that offer a variety of services for victims of domestic violence. A listing of domestic violence programs throughout the State that can provide additional information, support, and advocacy services follows:

<b>New Jersey County Domestic Violence Programs</b>	
<b>Atlantic County</b> Atlantic County Women's Center	Emergency Shelter 24 Hr. Toll free Hotline: 1-800-286-4184 TTY: (609) 645-2909
<b>Bergen County</b> Shelter our Sisters  Alternatives To Domestic Violence	Emergency Shelter 24 Hr. Hotline: 201-944-9600 TTY: 201-836-3071  24 Hr. Hotline: 201-336-7575 TTY: 201-336-7525
<b>Burlington County</b> Providence House Burlington County	Emergency Shelter 24 Hr. Hotline: (609) 871-7551 Toll free: 1-877-871-7551 TTY: (609) 871-7551 or 1-877-871-7551
<b>Camden County</b> Camden County Women's Center	Emergency Shelter 24 Hr. Hotline: 856-227-1234 TTY: 856-227-9264

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<b>New Jersey County Domestic Violence Programs</b>	
<p><b>Cape May County</b>            CARA, Inc. (Coalition Against Rape &amp; Abuse, Inc.)</p>	<p>Emergency Shelter            24 Hr. Hotline: 609-522-6489            Toll free: 877-294-CARA [2272]            TTY: 609-463-0818</p>
<p><b>Cumberland County</b>            Cumberland County Women's Center</p>	<p>Emergency Shelter            24 Hr. Hotline: 856-691-3713            24 Hr. Toll free: 800-286-4353            TTY: 856-691-6024</p>
<p><b>Essex County</b>            Babyland Family Violence Program</p> <p>The Safe House</p> <p>The Rachel Coalition c/o Jewish Family Service</p> <p>Linda &amp; Rudy Slucker            National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW)</p>	<p>Emergency Shelter            24 Hr. Hotline: 973-484-4446            TTY: 973-497-5510</p> <p>Emergency Shelter            24 Hr. Hotline: 973-759-2154</p> <p>Emergency Safehouse            24 Hr. Emergency Paging Service: 973-740-1233</p> <p>Outreach/Non-Residential Services            Office: (973) 994-4994</p>
<p><b>Gloucester County</b>            Center for Family Services - Services Empowering the Rights of Victims (SERV)</p>	<p>Toll free: 1-866-295-7378            TTY: 856-881-9323</p>
<p><b>Hudson County</b>            Womenrising, Inc.            (formally the YWCA)            Battered Women's Program</p>	<p>Emergency Shelter            24 Hr. Hotline: (201) 333-5700 ext. 511</p>
<p><b>Hunterdon County</b>            Women's Crisis Services</p>	<p>Emergency Shelter            24 Hr. Hotline: 888-988-4033            TTY: 866-954-0100</p>
<p><b>Mercer County</b>            Womanspace, Inc.</p>	<p>Emergency Shelter            24-Hr. Hotline: 609-394-9000            TTY: 609-394-9000 or 888-252-SAFE [7233]</p>

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<b>New Jersey County Domestic Violence Programs</b>	
<p><b>Middlesex County</b> Women Aware, Inc.</p> <p>Manavi, Inc.* * A non-profit organization for women who trace their cultural heritage to Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.</p>	<p>Emergency Shelter 24-Hr. Hotline: 732-249-4504 TTY: 732-249-0600</p> <p>Office: 732-435-1414</p>
<p><b>Monmouth County</b> 180 Turning Lives Around</p>	<p>Emergency Shelter 24-Hr. Hotline: 732-264-4111 Toll free: 888-THE-WCMC [843-9262] TTY: 732-264-3089</p>
<p><b>Morris County</b> Jersey Battered Women's Services, Inc. (JBWS)</p>	<p>Emergency Shelter 24 Hr. Hotline: 973-267-4763 TTY: 973-285-9095</p>
<p><b>Ocean County</b> Providence House - Ocean</p>	<p>Emergency Shelter 24 Hr. Hotline: (732) 244-8259 Toll free: 1-800-246-8910 (from the "609" area code only) TTY: (732) 244-8259 or 1-800-246-8910 (from the "609" area code only)</p>
<p><b>Passaic County</b> Passaic County Women's Center Domestic Violence Program</p> <p>Project S.A.R.A.H.</p> <p>Strengthen Our Sisters</p>	<p>Emergency Shelter 24-Hr. Hotline: (973) 881-1450 TTY: (973) 278-8630</p> <p>Hotline: 888-883-2323</p> <p>24-Hr. Hotline: 800-SOS [767]-9470 or (973) 728-0007</p>
<p><b>Salem County</b> Salem County Women's Services</p>	<p>24-Hr. Hotline: (856) 935-6655 Toll free: 1-888-632-9511 TTY: (856) 935-7118</p>
<p><b>Somerset County</b> Resource Center For Women and Their Families</p>	<p>Emergency Shelter 24-Hr. Toll free Hotline: 1-866-685-1122 Office: 908-359-0003</p>

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New Jersey County Domestic Violence Programs	
<b>Sussex County</b> Domestic Abuse Services, Inc.	Emergency Shelter 24 Hr. Hotline: 973-875-1211 TTY: 973-875-6369
<b>Union County</b> Project: Protect	Emergency Shelter 24-Hr. Hotline: 908-355-HELP [4357] TTY: 908-355-1023
<b>Warren County</b> Domestic Abuse & Rape Crisis Center (DARCC)	Emergency Shelter 24-Hr. Hotline: (908) 473-4181 Toll free: 1-866-6BE-SAFE [623-7233] TTY: (908) 453-2553

### **What to Do When You Care—Supporting Victims of Domestic Violence:**

- It is critical to create a strong support system that empowers a victim of domestic violence to break the cycle of violence.
- For many reasons, it is often difficult for a woman to acknowledge she is being abused by the person who is supposed to love her.
- Talking to a friend who you suspect is being abused may be difficult for you, but it may be the best way to be a friend.
- Sometimes, people would like to assist victims of domestic violence, but are unsure what to say or do. Below please find information on supporting a colleague, friend, or family member who is a victim of domestic violence:

### **What you CAN say to someone who you suspect is being battered:**

*"I care about you and I am sad this is happening to you. You do not deserve to be abused. The violence will get worse. I am afraid for your safety."*

### **You should:**

- Emphasize that you are concerned. Let the victim know you are supportive and that she is not responsible for what is happening to her – it is not her fault.
- Emphasize that when the victim is ready, there are a number of options available to help her. Allow her to make the decision that she needs help. Do not try and

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diagnose or treat the problem yourself, but offer to help her, including making contact with referral agencies.

- Demonstrate that you respect her decision if she decides to stay with her partner, even though you may not agree with it. Some victims leave and return to their partners several times. Let her know you support her no matter what and that going back does not mean failure.

### **What NOT to say to someone who you suspect is being battered:**

*“If someone hit me once, I would leave. I don’t know why you don’t just leave!”*

- You do not know why she is not leaving. Her reality is probably very different than yours. Leaving a partner can be a very difficult process and often is a dangerous process for victims of domestic violence. In most cases, the most dangerous time for a victim is right after she leaves.
- Do not dismiss her fears of him as if she is overreacting.
- Do not try to instill shame in her for making the decision to stay or return to the relationship.
- Do not tell her she is a battered woman – let her tell you.

### **Women’s Referral Central**

**Toll Free: 1 (800) 322-8092**

24 hours a day/ 7 days a week

- ◆ Provides information and referrals to women in New Jersey through a statewide toll-free telephone line. The Hotline provides referrals and basic information in areas such as discrimination, affordable housing, displaced homemakers, addiction services, continuing education, domestic violence, employment, legal assistance, divorce and separation, violence, health care, sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, child care, child support/custody, single parenting, job training, social services, services including medical, mental and reproductive health and other areas of concern.