DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OR BATTERING, is a pattern of abusive behaviors that some individuals use to control their intimate partners. Battering can include physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and other controlling behaviors. The following questions may help you decide whether you are being abused.

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 hurt you or others, or to disclose your sexual orientation or other personal information?
- 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 food, housing, clothing, or medical and physical assistance?

If you answered "yes" to any of the above, it may be time to think about your safety.

Help is Available

Many places offer 24-hour support, emergency shelter, advocacy and information about resources and safe options for you and your children. Call the statewide hotline for resources in your county.

NJ Domestic Violence Hotline

(Translators available in any language)

1-800-572-SAFE (7233)

609-392-2990 TTY

Women's Referral Central

1-800-322-8092

This hotline provides information and referrals on various issues concerning NJ's residents, including child care, discrimination, displaced homemaker, employment, housing, job training, legal assistance and more.

This brochure is part of a series developed by the Public Education Technical Assistance Project of the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence. It can be freely reproduced. For more information about the National Resource Center, Call 1-800-537-2238/1-800-553-2508 TTY

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE...

putting the pieces together

Finding Safety & Support

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

www.nj.gov/dcf

It Can Happen to Anyone

Domestic violence is a serious problem that has been happening for centuries. In the U.S. each year, it affects millions of people, most often women. 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.

It is Not Your Fault

If you are being abused by your partner, you may feel confused, afraid, angry or trapped. All of these emotions are normal responses to abuse. You may also blame yourself for what is happening. No matter what others might say, you are never responsible for your partner's abusive actions. Batterers choose to be abusive.

Identifying Support

Developing a support network can be very helpful to you as you plan for safety. There are many places to turn for assistance.

Community Support

Friends, family, women's and community groups, houses of worship and service providers (such as legal, health and counseling centers) can provide a variety of resources, support and assistance.

Domestic Violence Services

In every county in New Jersey, there are organizations that provide confidential help to individuals who are being battered. Information about finding and using these services is on the back of this brochure.

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 don't want to press criminal charges, you can file for a civil court order that directs your partner to stay away from you. A temporary restraining order (TRO) can forbid your partner from having contact with you or your relatives, require your partner to pay temporary child support and grant you temporary custody of your children.

Planning for Safety

Without help, domestic violence often continues to get more severe over time. It sometimes can become deadly.

To Increase Your Safety:

- **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 the 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/checkbooks, 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.**
- **Trust your instincts - if you think you are in immediate danger, you probably are. Get to a safe place as soon as you can.**

No one deserves to be battered.