



# SIGNS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE

Sheriff Errol D. Toulon, Jr.

## SUDDEN CHANGES IN MOOD

If someone begins to display unexpected anger, panic, or sadness, it may be a response to stress caused by domestic violence.



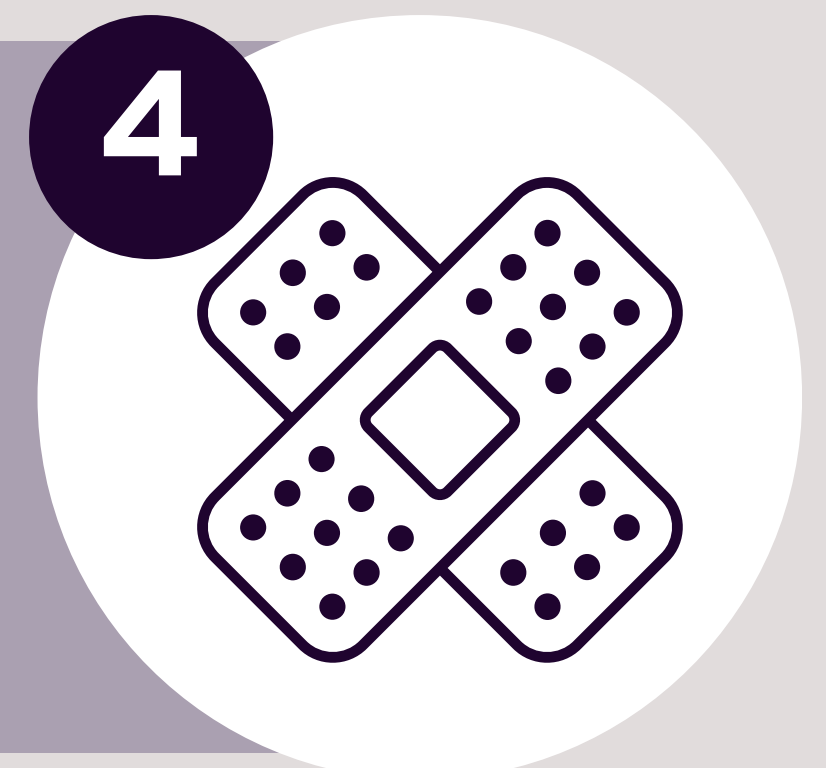
## ISOLATION

Victims of abuse may withdraw from family and friends, often canceling plans at the last minute or ignoring calls and messages. If they also lose interest in hobbies or activities they once enjoyed, it could be a warning sign.



## BRUISES

Repeated, unexplained, or patterned bruises — especially if the person seems evasive about how they occurred — may be signs of physical abuse.



## CAUTIOUS AROUND THEIR PARTNER

If someone seems nervous around their partner, avoids certain topics, or changes their behavior when their partner is present, it could indicate emotional or psychological abuse.



[www.suffolksheriff.com](http://www.suffolksheriff.com)

REPORTING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY.



# IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING

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Domestic violence isn't always visible, but signs like unexplained injuries, sudden mood changes, or fear around a partner can be red flags. Trust your instincts. Speak up by offering support or contacting a trusted resource. Your voice could help save a life.



## START THE CONVERSATION

Ask simple, caring questions like "How are you?" or "Is everything okay?" Sometimes just knowing someone cares opens the door.



## VALIDATE FEELINGS

Let them know their emotions—fear, anger, confusion—are real and understandable. Avoid judgment or minimizing their experience.



## LISTEN AND SUPPORT

Focus on being there and listening, not fixing. Survivors need to feel heard and in control of their choices.



## KNOW THE LAW

Educate yourself on legal rights and protections available locally so you can provide informed, practical support.



## BUILD CONNECTION

Invite them to social activities. Isolation can increase risk, so small moments of inclusion can mean a lot.



## ACT IN EMERGENCIES

If you witness abuse happening, call 911 for help immediately—safety is the top priority.



## RESPECT THEIR JOURNEY

Leaving an abusive relationship is complicated. Support them without pressure or judgment, and remind them they're not alone.



## TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS

If you suspect something is wrong, don't ignore it. Checking in could be life-changing.

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# RED FLAGS FOR PARENTS

## UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

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### IS YOUR TEEN SAFE IN THEIR RELATIONSHIPS?

Have you noticed any sudden changes in your teen's behavior, such as withdrawal, mood swings, or increased anxiety?

Has your teen stopped spending time with their usual friends or lost interest in activities they used to enjoy?

Have you seen unexplained bruises, injuries, or signs of self-harm that your teen avoids talking about?

Does your teen seem unusually secretive or defensive when asked about their relationship or whereabouts?

Have they started dressing differently to cover up parts of their body, even in warm weather?

Do they seem to lack confidence or show signs of being constantly criticized or put down?

Have you noticed any controlling behaviors from a dating partner, such as monitoring their phone or isolating them from friends and family?

### RED FLAGS FOR PARENTS

- Unexplained bruises or frequent injuries
- Withdrawing from friends and family
- Loss of interest in hobbies or activities
- Fear or nervousness around their partner
- Dressing to cover up injuries, even in warm weather
- Making excuses for their partner's behavior
- Drop in grades or school attendance
- Becoming unusually secretive or guarded
- Decline in self-esteem or confidence
- Partner shows up uninvited or unannounced
- Being overly worried about making their partner angry
- Sudden personality changes when their partner is around
- Expressing hopelessness or talking about self-harm
- Using phrases like "It's my fault" or "They just care too much"

### TRUST YOURSELF

Talking to teens about scenarios and red flags is crucial for their safety. It equips them with skills like critical thinking and decision-making, empowering them to navigate situations confidently and identify potential risks. These discussions foster trust and open communication, contributing to teens' resilience and overall well-being.

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# ARE YOU EXPERIENCING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

## S I G N S   T O   N O T I C E

1

Is your partner insulting, gaslighting or belittling you?

2

Is your partner using physical violence, such as punching or slapping?

3

Is your partner pressuring you into sexual conduct?

4

Is your partner trying to control what you wear, what you say and what you do?

5

Does your partner show extreme jealousy and accuse you of being disloyal?

6

Does your partner try to control your finances?

7

Is your partner making threats to leave, commit crimes, or hurt you or a loved one?

8

Does your partner put the blame on you or make you feel worthless and shameful?



# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

## CRISIS AND SUPPORT SERVICES

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### NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE

The National Domestic Violence Hotline offers 24/7 confidential support, resources, and advocacy to individuals affected by domestic violence through phone, chat, and text.

- Phone: 1-800-799-SAFE (7233)
- TTY: 1-800-787-3224
- Text: Text "START" to 88788



### THE RETREAT, INC.

The Retreat Inc. provides safety, shelter, and support to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, while promoting prevention through education and community outreach.

- 24-Hour Bilingual Hotline: 631-329-2200
- Website: [allagainstabuse.org](http://allagainstabuse.org)



### L.I. AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

L.I. Against Domestic Violence provides comprehensive support services and advocacy for victims of domestic abuse while working to prevent violence through education and outreach.

- 24-hour Hotline: 631-666-8833
- Website: [liadv.org](http://liadv.org)



### BRIGHTER TOMORROWS, INC.

Brighter Tomorrows, Inc. empowers survivors of domestic violence by offering safe shelter, counseling, legal advocacy, transitional housing, and economic-empowerment programs.

- 24-Hour Crisis Hotline: 631-395-1800
- Website: [brightertomorrowssinc.org](http://brightertomorrowssinc.org)

**[www.suffolksheriff.com](http://www.suffolksheriff.com)**

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