

11 Things to Know About Intimate Partner Violence



1. It's not just physical.

Physical abuse is the most easily understood form of intimate partner violence, and it's often thought to occur between people in romantic or sexual relationships.

Intimate partner violence can take many other forms. It can involve children and older adults. It can be verbal, sexual, emotional, or financial.

2. Intimate partner violence is exacerbated by crisis.

Violence disproportionately affects marginalized people.

While difficult circumstances aren't the cause of intimate partner violence, hardship can increase tension and reduce access to resources.

COVID-19 has resulted in an increase in intimate partner violence due to lockdowns and curfews. This is on top of the stress of worsening socioeconomic conditions.

Due to restrictions on movement, it has been more difficult for people to escape and easier for loved ones to miss the signs that something is wrong.

Isolation tactics can go unnoticed due to physical distancing becoming a norm, however temporary.

3. Abusers want control.

A frequently missed red flag is a series of increasing attempts of one person to control another.

In many cases, it appears to be kindness or concern. An early

attempt could be showing up unexpectedly to an event they weren't invited to attend or picking up their partner from work.

These acts can be read as positive. They seem to indicate the partner wants to spend more time with their significant other, but they set a norm within the relationship wherein boundaries are repeatedly crossed and freedom of choice is restricted.

These actions indirectly communicate that the partner can show up at any time, giving the sense that they're omnipresent.

This can have the effect of making the person subjected to the abuse self-police, behaving as though their partner is there at all times. They may limit their communication and behavior as a result.

4. Surveillance is often central.

Interest isn't the same as surveillance. Abusive partners may start to monitor activities and interactions under the guise of interest or protection.

It's easy to accept that a person may want to check out new apps, read the joke in the group chat, or accompany their partner to a party, but excessive insertion into social spaces isn't healthy.

Checking emails, answering cellphone calls, and listening to private conversations are signs of control and distrust. These actions can lead the person being abused to choose isolation to avoid embarrassment or negative attention from their partner.