



Intimate Partner Violence: Common Myths and Misconceptions

Intimate partner violence is not always easy to understand, but some common myths can be harmful to victims and survivors. They can allow the abuse to keep happening and prevent victims from getting the support they deserve. Here are some common myths society has about intimate partner violence.

MYTH:

That doesn't happen in my community.

TRUTH:

Anyone can be a victim of intimate partner violence regardless of their age, race, class, gender, or sexual orientation. It happens in every community, even yours.

MYTH:

That's a private family matter, I should stay out of it.

TRUTH:

Victims of intimate partner violence often feel isolated and alone, so it's important they know there are people who care about them. Ask them how you can be the most supportive.

MYTH:

The victim must have done something to provoke the abusive partner.

TRUTH:

No one deserves to be abused, and abuse is never a victim's fault. Problems in a relationship should never be solved with abuse or acts of violence.

MYTH:

The abusive partner just has a drinking/drug problem.

TRUTH:

Although drugs/alcohol may intensify violent behavior, it does not cause violence. Being abusive is a choice. Getting sober may help, but it does not change the abusive partner's underlying desire for control.

MYTH:

The abusive partner must have mental health issues.

TRUTH:

Abuse is a learned behavior, not a mental illness. Though some abusive partners may have a mental health issue, rates of mental illness is no higher in abusive partners than it is in the general population.

MYTH:

Only women being physically abused can get help.

TRUTH:

Intimate partner violence service agencies are required to help victims regardless of gender, sexual orientation, or type of abuse. No one experiencing intimate partner violence should be turned away from getting help.

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